

Hafa Adai!

CNMI sees fuel price rollback three weeks in a row. PAGE 4
Star Marianas says new CPA fees forced them to stop flying. PAGE 5

\$1

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ARRIVAL HONORS

Commonwealth Ports Authority police officers escort the remains of honorary Philippine consul to the CNMI Glicerio "El" Arago, while Department of Public Safety officers present the colors in a ceremony held soon after Arago's remains arrived yesterday at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport yesterday from Guam. Arago passed away last Nov. 24, 2021. He was 69 years old. There will be a public viewing on Saturday at Mount Carmel Cathedral from 9am to 11am, followed by a Memorial Mass. Arago will be interred in the Philippines.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

103: NMI's first 3-digit spike

By JOSHUA SANTOS
joshua_santos@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

One hundred three new cases of COVID-19. The CNMI breached the three-digit barrier yesterday with 103 individuals identified and confirmed positive for COVID-19—all from

surveillance testing, according to the latest news release of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

The latest tally brings the CNMI's total count to 958.

All 103 new cases were found through surveillance testing covering four days—

from Nov. 27 to 30—and have since been isolated and are being monitored.

Despite the increases in community transmissions in

See 103 on Page 4

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:

- Red: Least safe
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- Green: Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

22 DAYS
BEFORE CHRISTMAS

CURRENT COVID-19 VACCINATIONS



INSIDE



LOCAL

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. launches two customer payment kiosks at its Dandan office.

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NATION

The United States recorded its first confirmed case of the omicron variant last Wednesday.

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WORLD

The United Nations predicts that 274 million people will require humanitarian aid in 2022.

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GOT A NEWS TIP?

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Local

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcing the 'Holiday Art Bazaar'

The public is invited to attend the "Holiday Art Bazaar" on Dec. 18, 2021, a Saturday, from 9am to 3pm at the Kagman Community Center. This is an event for the residents of Saipan and the Precinct 5 community to promote local art, artists and small businesses and to provide a venue for people to buy locally made gifts in time for the holidays. Stay tuned for the announcement of participating vendors next Friday!

This event is sponsored by the offices of your Precinct 5 representatives and has been approved by the COVID-19 Task Force. The COVID safety guidelines of the 3W's will be enforced: Wash your hands, Wear a Mask, Watch your Distance. (PR)

American Red Cross is going 'Hollywood'

The American Red Cross-NMI Chapter will be hosting a fundraising dinner on Feb. 26, 2022, a Saturday, at the Kensington Hotel Saipan, from 6pm to 10pm, with the theme of "Hollywood." This will be a fine dining event to showcase the Red Cross' humanitarian work and recognize the hometown hero "stars" who have been a guiding light throughout the pandemic. For more information, contact the

Red Cross at 234-3459. (PR)

Learn about advanced health care planning on Dec. 4 and Dec. 7

Man'amko and their families and caregivers will have another opportunity to learn about advanced care planning in two upcoming live Zoom sessions hosted by the Guam/Micronesia Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program under the University of Guam School of Health.

Advanced care planning is the process of discussing and choosing future health care and medical treatment options in the event a patient loses the ability to make or communicate personal health care decisions.

The sessions will be led by Annamma Varghese, an assisting professor of nursing at UOG who holds a doctor of Nursing Practice degree, and Dr. Delores J. Lee, a family medicine physician at Evergreen Health Center.

The sessions are free to members of the public in Guam and throughout Micronesia.

To register, visit the following links:

- 9am–10am on Saturday, Dec. 4: <https://bit.ly/ACP1204>
- 6:30pm–7:30pm on Tuesday, Dec. 7: <https://bit.ly/ACP1207>

For more information, call (671) 735-0109/0128 or email uog.gwep@triton.uog.edu. (PR)

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CHCC board nixes mandating vaccinations for students

By JOSHUA SANTOS
joshua_santos@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Preferring to persuade rather than mandate, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. board of trustees has decided not to change regulations that would have made COVID-19 vaccinations a requirement for obtaining health certificates and possibly also for enrolling in any CNMI schools.

During a board meeting on

JGO Committee subpoenas DPS chief Deleon Guerrero

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House of Representatives Judiciary and Governmental Operations Committee subpoenaed Department of Public Safety Commissioner Robert Alepuyo Deleon Guerrero yesterday to summon him before the committee, which is investigating Gov. Ralph DLG Guerrero's expenditures of public funds and travels.



JGO Committee chair Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan) affirmed that Deleon Guerrero was served with the subpoena at his office at 9:30am, commanding him to appear and testify at the committee's next hearing on Dec. 7 at 9:30am.

House sergeant-at-arms Pedro O. Towai served Deleon Guerrero with the subpoena.

Saipan Tribune tried to obtain comments from Deleon Guerrero yesterday but he had yet to respond as of press time.

The subpoena lists several items for the commissioner to testify on, including DPS Boating Safety policies, procedures, and operations. It will also ask Deleon Guerrero about records, incurred expenses, travel authorizations, travel vouchers, reimbursement requests, boat manifests, and float plans in connection with boat trips taken by police officers Emery Kaipat, Adrian

Dec. 1, the board voted to not move forward with amendments to the "CHCC School and Child Care Facilities and Communicable Disease Rules and Regulations." Instead, the board voted to conduct more public education campaigns and outreaches and to compile more research and data on the matter.

In a social media post Wednesday, Rep. Christina E. Sablan (D-Saipan)—who

chairs the House of Representatives Committee on Health and Welfare—wrote that she and Rep. Leila Staffler (D-Saipan)—who chairs the House Committee on Education—attended the Dec. 1 CHCC board meeting since she and Staffler on Nov. 22 signed and submitted a joint request to hold oral hearings on the proposed changes to CHCC's rules and regulations.

Sablan attached to her social media post the Nov. 22 request addressed to CHCC chief executive officer Esther L. Muña. In the request, Sablan and Staffler cited a portion of the law that requires agencies like CHCC to provide opportunities for oral hearings before making changes to any of their agency regulations. The two further asked that these hearings be made accessible on Saipan, Timian, and Rota.

Sablan and Staffler also cited another portion of the law that says that, if an agency like CHCC were to go through

See CHCC on Next Page

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CNMI sees fuel price rollback three weeks in a row

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI saw another cut in fuel prices just a week since its last 10-cent roll back.

This means fuel companies have been reducing their prices nearly three weeks in a row.

Late yesterday afternoon, Mobil Oil Marianas took the lead with a 15-cent reduction in fuel prices. Mobil's Extra fuel dropped from \$4.96 a gallon to \$4.81. Mobil also dropped its Supreme fuel from \$5.41 to \$5.26 while its diesel rolled back from \$5.23 a gallon to \$5.08.

Shell Marianas has yet to reduce its prices as of 6:30pm yesterday but both oil companies typically mirror each other's price changes, so Shell is expected to impose the same reduction today.

A gas attendant told *Saipan Tribune* it seems that the Marianas is



Late yesterday afternoon, Mobil Oil Marianas took the lead with a 15-cent reduction in fuel prices.

KIMBERLY BAUTISTA



when I passed by the Mobil station near my house, it was still \$4.96. When I got to Garapan, I couldn't believe my eyes, it went down like cents. I was like 'I'm definitely going to get gas now,'" she said.

She added that a few cents may not seem like a lot but for indigent people, it makes a difference.

"I couldn't even get a gallon of gas with my \$5 like a month ago. Now, my \$5 gets me a gallon and some. It really makes a difference for someone like me. It's like a little early holiday discount," she said.

Another local motorist, a 48-year-old male, said he was so excited to see another rollback.

"It's like a little good news this holiday season. I'm definitely going to full tank my car and go strolling while I can," he joked.

CNMI Equality Act, gender identity bills prefled

Following discussions and recommendations generated from the Commonwealth's first legislative Pride Talks roundtable last June, Rep. Tina Sablan (D-Saipan) has prefled two bills to advance gender equality and promote the health, safety, and well-being of LGBTQ people in the Marianas.

One of these bills is the CNMI Equality Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, and aims to ensure that all people in the Marianas may enjoy the same access to basic necessities and opportunities to thrive. The bill adds protections for sexual orientation and gender identity in the Commonwealth's nondiscrimination laws, covering areas such as employment, healthcare, housing, commerce, and jury service.

Sablan, who chairs the House Health and Welfare Committee, also prefled legislation to update the CNMI's vital statistics law, consistent with current medical standards of care and best practices, by easing the process for transgender individuals to match the gender markers on their birth certificates to their gender identities. The bill includes privacy protections for individuals

who seek to alter the gender markers on their birth certificates, and removes the overly burdensome requirements of a surgical procedure and court order.

"One of the top priorities of the Health and Welfare Committee, and the leadership of the House, is to promote the equality, health, safety, and wellbeing of the LGBTQ members of our community," Sablan said. "Currently, the CNMI ranks among the lowest in the nation in terms of LGBTQ protections in our laws. We set out to change that."

"We strongly supported the passage of the CNMI's first Hate Crimes Act (H.B. 22-18), authored by our colleague, Rep. Donald Manglona (Ind-Saipan), and passed unanimously by the House in June. We followed with Pride Talks to further the conversation about how we can make the Marianas a safer, more inclusive and loving place for everyone, especially our young people. The bills we prefled today are a product of that ongoing dialogue, and bring us closer to our goal," she said.

In a statement, LGBTQ advocate Tyra Lyn Sablan, who also participated in the Health and Welfare Committee's Pride Talks in June, expressed her support for the bills.

cases were still pending verification.

Since Oct. 28, there have been 667 new cases identified in the CNMI. Of the 667, 319 were found through contact tracing, 336 through community-based testing, and 12 through travel testing.

As for its vaccination updates, CHCC reported that 401 COVID-19 shots were administered on Nov. 30, bringing the CNMI's vaccination rate to 86.9%. Getting vaccinated, and the CNMI's high vaccination rate "affords the community more protection against severe illness, hospitalization, and death," said CHCC.

In related news, during a virtual news briefing on Wednesday CHCC chief executive officer Esther L. Muñá reported four CO-

"This is a historic time not only for us in the CNMI but for our region and country. Our culture of respect and love for one another is evident with the creation of the CNMI Equality Act, and the positive impact of this legislation will be felt for generations to come," she said. "We are thankful and fortunate to have [Rep.] Tina Sablan and the Health and Welfare Committee champion such legislation, and we are very grateful for the support from our Honorable Leaders, both in the Senate and House of Representatives."

Cosponsors of the CNMI Equality Act include Reps. Leila Staffler (D-Saipan), Sheila Babauta (D-Saipan), Edwin Propst (D-Saipan), Richard Lizama (D-Saipan), Roy Ada (R-Saipan), and Celina Babauta (D-Saipan). Cosponsors of the Vital Records amendment include Propst, Staffler, Sheila Babauta, Celina Babauta, Lizama, Blas Jonathan Attao (R-Saipan), and Vicente Camacho (D-Saipan). Sablan said other members have expressed support for the bills and are expected to add their names as co-sponsors. To request copies of the bills and/or submit comments, contact Sablan's office at (670) 664-8829 or staff.rep.sablan@cnmleg.net. (PR)

VID-19 cases on Tinian. She said three are asymptomatic and one is experiencing mild symptoms. She said one index case—the original case—was identified and a second case was linked to the same household as the index case. The third and fourth cases were from two different households and were identified through contact tracing. The cases have since been isolated, said Muñá.

Muñá also said that discussions with Tinian leadership have been ongoing to discuss the next steps in the event of more cases and to discuss the possibility of having a quarantine site on the island. Muñá added that similar discussions and considerations are ongoing for Rota as well.

mirroring the Philippines in terms of oil trends.

"The Philippines has also been reducing its fuel for the past month or so. When the Philippines increase, we did too. I'm hopeful that we will continue to see decreases in prices at least until the end of 2021 with the way gas trends are going in the Philippines," he said.

A 27-year-old motorist said it was like an early present when she pulled up at Mobil to see that the gas price had gone down.

"I was honestly contemplating whether to gas up today because

VILLAGOMEZ

From Page 1

may be removed by the governor with or without cause."

He asked Villagomez to return to the OMB offices items such as keys, key cards, phones, computer equipment (laptops, tablets, etc.) work documents, and any other government property in her possession or control.

CHCC

From Page 3

with approving changes, if requested, agencies like CHCC are to "issue a concise statement of the principal reasons for and against its adoption, incorporating therein its reasons for overruling the considerations urged against its adoption."

Sablan reiterated in her post Wednesday that she and Staffler fully support COVID-19 vaccination for all eligible residents, including children. However, at this time, the two acknowledge that more public engagement is needed to address the questions and concerns many in the community—parents with school-age in particular—have regarding COVID-19 vaccines for children.

Also in her post Wednesday, Sablan lauded the CHCC board for its review of public comments, facts, and the current circumstances in deciding to not move forward with the amendments. The board's decision, Sablan said, "was not made lightly."

Torres said any matters related to closing out Villagomez's time as the special assistant for OMB will be addressed by Mathilda A. Rosario, the special assistant for Administration.

"Thank you for your time serving my administration. I wish you good luck on your future endeavor," said the governor in the termination letter.

Villagomez was the governor's authorized representative on Super Typhoon Yutu.

When asked about the public comments received thus far prior to the Dec. 1 board meeting, Muñá said at a Nov. 29 news briefing that many comments received were against mandating vaccines for school-aged children.

Muñá at the time further explained that, if the board approves moving forward with the proposed amendments, there will be public hearings scheduled to discuss the changes. If the board voted to not move forward with the amendments, there will be no public hearings.

Currently, portions of the "CHCC School and Child Care Facilities and Communicable Disease Rules and Regulations" require proof of immunization against a list of diseases that include diphtheria; pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles (rubeola), mumps, and rubella (German measles), and hepatitis B.

The proposed addition that was up for deliberation by the CHCC board was to include "COVID-19 and its variants (to the extent the child is eligible to receive the vaccine)" to this list of diseases.

103

From Page 1

the last few days, the CNMI remains at Level Green in the Community Vulnerability Scale. This is the safest level in the five-color scale, with Red as the least safe.

CHCC also reported that there are 493 active cases of COVID-19 right now and seven active hospitalizations. Of the seven, six are unvaccinated, one is vaccinated, and no one is on a ventilator.

Of the 103 new cases, 50 were found through community-based testing and 53 through contact tracing. As of yesterday morning, CHCC said the vaccination statuses of the

SMA: New CPA rate computation forced them to stop flying

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Star Marianas Airlines Inc., claims that the Commonwealth Ports Authority's new method in assessing rental rates has made the company's cost to provide air services not financially feasible and forced them to stop flying.

According to a letter from Star Marianas president Shaun Christian that was addressed to CPA, he said the recent change in CPA's assessment of airport fees in line with the

current economic conditions has forced them to stop flying and their resumption is dependent on CPA and the CNMI government.

"Under these conditions, SMA's estimate of the cost of providing air services is not financially feasible. SMA therefore finds itself forced to stop flying, until fees assessed can be clearly determined and the rate structure is brought in line with the economic conditions that exist in the inter-island market. Star Marianas is willing and able to resume

its flight operations when the CNMI creates conditions that allow such services to be performed. Therefore, the length of time that Star Marianas suspends its flights rests solely with the government of the CNMI and its CPA," he said.

Christian said the revised CPA regulations have created an impossible business environment for SMA or any airline to conduct operations between the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

He explained that CPA represented that the new method of accessing rates would decrease fees for Star Marianas.

However, he claims that the cost effect of providing inter-island travel was misinterpreted.

"The evidence offered by CPA confirms that under the new compensatory rate structure, SMA will be expected to pay a total of only \$126,807 in fees at all three airports combined during the current fiscal year—and this represents a fee decrease, not a fee increase. In reaching this conclusion that fees would decrease, CPA omitted provisions that are included in Regulation 40.10.1 and made computations of the landing fees to be paid by SMA using the total number of land-

ings per airport. When SMA submitted its October 2021 activity report, the CPA subsequently requested that SMA revise its report to include Landed Weights as opposed to just the number of landings. Therefore, since CPA bases the calculations of the fees and charges currently applicable to Star Marianas in accordance with provisions in Regulation 40.10.1 and based on Landed Weights calculation rather than total landings, the amount of fees to be paid are [over \$230,000]. Thus, contrary to the earlier representations, the cost-effect of providing inter-

island flight services has been misrepresented," he said.

Star Marianas has since filed a complaint with the FAA and the U.S. Department of Transportation. The DOT determined that this was not a significant dispute and declined to exercise jurisdiction but referred the matter to FAA. The FAA has informed SMA that it is coordinating the request for assistance with the FAA's Regional Office.

In a statement on its website, Star Marianas said its suspension of flights was due to "the risks presented by an unhealthy flight environment."

Free LED light bulbs or portable gas stoves to be given away

The Energy Division Office of the Department of Public Works will be distributing energy-efficient LED light bulbs or portable gas stoves to residential households this Saturday as part of a campaign to promote energy conservation and efficiency measures that reduce energy use and save money.

The drive-thru distribution event will be held on Dec. 4, 2021, at the 500 Sails parking lot in Susupe, from 9am to 12pm.

The "2021 Saipan Energy Educational Awareness and Community Outreach Program Campaign Drive-Thru Distribution Event" will also have the Division of Energy educating residential consumers and the community about the importance of energy efficiency and conservation efforts in the CNMI and its impact on the protection and preservation of available precious natural resources in the environment.

To avail of the LED light bulbs or portable gas stove, residential homeowners must present a copy of a valid government issued identification card and a copy of a most recent CUC utility billing with same name on ID and CUC account.

Residents that are tenants of apartments, rental properties, etc., and not named as the CUC account holder must provide a copy of a lease or

CHCC team to aid COVID-19 info outreach

The Commonwealth Health-care Corp. is launching a personalized door-to-door outreach to assist people who speak English as their second language and may need extra help accessing information about COVID-19 vaccination, testing, or registration process. The outreach team will begin visiting homes on Saturday, Dec. 4, 2021.

This effort will ensure every individual who wants a COVID-19 vaccination or test is able to get one.

COVID-19 vaccination is a safe and effective way to build protection against COVID-19.

rental agreement.

If the residential homeowner with the CUC account holder's name is unable to make it, provide a letter of authorization along with a copy of ID matching CUC account name to avail of the distribution item.

Businesses, rental property owners and/or landlords are not eligible to receive the LED light bulbs or portable gas stoves.

During the drive-thru event, residential households will have a choice of receiving only one of the items below: Either a bag of 10 LED light bulbs or one portable gas stove.

With only a limited number of supplies available for this event, LED light bulbs and portable gas stoves will be available for distribution on a first-come, first-served basis throughout the specified time only, or while supplies last.

Due to the continuing threat of COVID-19, the public is required to observe and comply with all health and safety protocols at the drive-thru event. Masks are required at all times during the program event's hours of operations. All vehicle operators and passengers must remain in their vehicles at all times and must follow all posted event signs and obey all event traffic flow signs.

For additional questions or information regarding this event, contact reporting specialist Maile Iakopo at 664-4480/4. (PR)



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Holiday displays only for Christmas in the Marianas

» \$4,500 cash for winning displays

In consideration of the rising number of COVID-19 cases on Saipan, the Marianas Visitors Authority has decided to focus on its Marianas Christmas Village, Christmas Tree display, and light sculptures and cancel other activities associated with this year's Christmas in the Marianas celebration.

Live entertainment and vendor sales slated for Dec. 10 and 11, 2021, at Garapan Fishing Base are cancelled. However, MVA is still seeking 10 participants for its Marianas Christmas Village display, which will offer cash prizes for the Top 3 winning displays.

"Out of an abundance of caution due to the rising number of COVID-19 cases, we have decided to cancel the in-person events for this year's

Christmas in the Marianas," said MVA acting managing director Judy Torres. "However, we are still welcoming groups who are interested in creating a display for our Marianas Christmas Village. This will be a great opportunity to creatively express and share the holiday spirit with the community."

Participants will have the opportunity to decorate a 10'x10' area. Participants may decorate with any Marianas-inspired Christmas theme for the chance to win cash prizes. Cash prizes to be awarded are \$2,000 for first place, \$1,500 for second place, and \$1,000 for third place.

In addition, Christmas trees

decorated by 13 participating schools and light sculptures of island Christmas scenes will be on display. The Marianas Christmas Village will open on Dec. 10, 2021, and remain on display through the new year.

To sign up for the Marianas Christmas Village, call the MVA Community Projects Division at 1.670.664.3200/1 or email community.projects@mymarianas.com. (PR)

Hyatt lights up its Christmas tree

By JOSHUA SANTOS
joshua_santos@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

In what has become a yearly tradition, the Hyatt Regency Saipan lit up a giant Christmas tree at its lobby on Dec. 1, with hotel staff, their families, and some community members in attendance. The fully-decorated, 20-foot Christmas tree is a mainstay of Hyatt's lobby during the holiday season.

Hyatt Regency Saipan general manager Nick Nishikawa said Wednesday that this year in particular is cause for celebration, with Hyatt signing in Oct. another 40-year lease that solidifies the continued presence of the Hyatt brand in the CNMI. Hyatt is also celebrating its 41st year here in the CNMI this year.

Nishikawa said the COVID-19 pandemic has brought hardships to all, to him and the Hyatt no less. Despite this setback, Nishikawa said that Hyatt will continue to be optimistic and hope that conditions will improve.

"Starting from March 2020, everything went upside down. Everybody has [gone through hardships], but we [as a] hotel cannot be depressed, so we are always...optimistic [that] things [will] get better soon. We have been having a difficult time since this pandemic started but, as I said, we want to celebrate anyway. So maybe things [will] get better soon," said Nishikawa.



As for other celebrations at Hyatt for the Christmas season, Nishikawa briefly mentioned that a staff party was supposed to take place on Wednesday alongside the tree lighting ceremony. However, with the recent rise in community cases of COVID-19, Nishikawa said the party was postponed and tentatively rescheduled to the third week of December.

Hyatt Regency Saipan officials and staff gather for a picture by the hotel's Christmas tree after a tree-lighting ceremony at the hotel lobby on Dec. 1. Featured in the picture is Hyatt Regency Saipan general manager Nick Nishikawa. The 20-foot, fully-decorated tree is a mainstay of Hyatt's lobby during the holiday season, and lighting up the tree every Dec. 1 is a yearly tradition for the hotel.

JOSHUA SANTOS

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To lessen in-person contact, CUC launches billing kiosks

By JOSHUA SANTOS
joshua_santos@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. soft-launched two customer payment kiosks at its Customer Center in Dandan,

with four more to be deployed in various locations on Saipan sometime later. The kiosks are fully touchscreen and also feature a full keyboard and trackpad for ease of use and accessibility.

To access the kiosks, customers will need their CUC account number, email and password attached to their CUC account, and their credit or debit cards.

Once logged in, customers



Alyssa King, administrative technician senior for the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., demonstrates how to make a utility payment using CUC's new customer billing kiosks. Two of these kiosks are up and running at CUC's Customer Center in Dandan, with plans to have four others placed in various locations on Saipan.

JOSHUA SANTOS

can choose to make a postpaid or PayGo prepaid utility payment, enter their credit or debit card information, and receive a receipt through email confirming that the transaction was completed. For those in a hurry, the kiosks have quick pay capabilities as well.

On top of payment capabilities, the kiosks also allow customers to view their billing and payment histories as well as their most recent bills in real-time.

CUC executive director Gary P. Camacho said Wednesday that a total of six

kiosks will be deployed. On top of the two set up at CUC's Customer Center in Dandan, there will be four other kiosks deployed in various satellite locations on Saipan for consumer convenience.

Camacho said it will take about a month before CUC starts identifying possible satellite locations for these kiosks. When that time comes, CUC will be informing the community on where these kiosks are.

Camacho said he and CUC continue to encourage customers to make online payments through CUC's web-

site, but said that the kiosks are a welcome addition to making CUC payments more accessible and as another means of minimizing in-person interactions and streamlining the payment process.

"There's a number of advantages by having a kiosk and it's something we've been trying to do for quite some time. We're very, very happy and I'm very proud of the staff to have finally [gotten] it to this stage. It'll be approximately about a month before we start identifying locations and placing them onto other sites," he said.

Torres appoints Quitugua, Basa as CPUC members

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres has nominated former Rota High School principal Oscar Patrick Quitugua and re-nominated former Saipan representative Ramon S. Basa

to serve as members of the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission.

Torres appointed Quitugua to serve as CPUC member representing the First Senatorial District or Rota. Quitugua is a former CPUC member.

Torres re-nominated Basa to serve as CPUC member representing the Third Senatorial District or Saipan and the Northern Islands. Basa is a former representative.

Their appointments require the confirmation by both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

If confirmed, Quitugua will serve a four-year term, which will expire on April 3, 2022. If confirmed, Basa will serve a four-year term which will expire on April 3, 2024.

The CPUC is a five-mem-

ber governing body that regulates the rates and service of public utilities such as electricity supply, water supply, and telecommunications in the Commonwealth.

As of press time yesterday, *Saipan Tribune* was still awaiting information from press secretary Kevin Bau-tista as to who are the current member/s of CPUC.

In his letter Tuesday to Senate President Jude U. Hof-schneider (R-Tinian) and House Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan), Torres said that Quitugua and Basa

are highly qualified to fulfill the vital responsibilities of CPUC. The governor is confident that Quitugua and Basa will continue to devote their time and efforts to represent the interests of the Commonwealth.



PUTI'ON TWIN HULL NOTICE OF AUCTION/BIDDING

Year: 1984; Official No. 677731; Call Sign: WCZ5662; Service: Passenger
Hull Material: Wood; Horsepower: 530; Propulsion: Diesel
Gross Tonnage: 99 GRT; Net Tonnage: 85 NRT; Length: 83.6; Breadth: 30.0; Depth: 11.0

For more Information

Pursuant to the Stipulated Judgment in Commonwealth Ports Authority v. Saipan Sea Ventures, Inc., Civ. No. 18-0498, notice is given of the auction of the vessel owned by Saipan Sea Ventures, Inc., to be sold at auction by the Commonwealth Ports Authority. Risk of loss remains with Saipan Sea Ventures, Inc. until the winning bidder's bid is approved by the Commonwealth Superior Court after which time the winning bidder shall assume ownership and responsibility for the vessel. By submitting a bid and if accepted, the winning bidder agrees to accept full risk and responsibility of the vessel once approved by the Commonwealth Superior Court, including compliance with CNMI and Federal/USCG laws and regulations.

Please contact Commonwealth Ports Authority counsel, Robert T. Torres at (670) 234-7859/234-5750. Email: robert.torres@rttlawgroup.com. Minimum bid for the Puti'on Twin Hull is \$75,000.00 Any bid(s) less than the minimum bid will be rejected. Bid submissions will be closed at 4 pm on December 9, 2021. Bid(s) opening shall be at 4:30 p.m. on December 10, 2021. The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any and all offer(s). A "Puti'on Twin Hull" bid form can be obtained from the Commonwealth Ports Authority, through its Counsel at Robert T. Torres Law Office, Chalan Kiya P.O. Box 503758 CK Saipan, MP 96950.

Bid Instructions

- This is a private auction/bidding on behalf of the Commonwealth Ports Authority. The bidding is conducted through the Law Office of Robert T. Torres using a written/sealed bid process. However, the Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to reject any and all offers including any offer not determined to be commercially reasonable. Bids may be submitted to the Law Office of Robert T. Torres in Chalan Kiya, Saipan.
- The Puti'on Twin Hull is offered for bid and sale "As Is" and without any warranty or guarantee as to fitness for use and each bidder is on notice to research this specialized and particular unit as a twin hull motor craft and the conditions in which it may be used in the CNMI or in other locations.
- All sales shall be paid by Cash or Cashier's Check within three (3) calendar days of notice to the winning bidder. Personal checks/company checks are not accepted.
- If a bid is accepted, the winning bidder shall tender the full amount upon notice and take shall be responsible for the removal of the vessel within three (3) calendar days. Otherwise, the next highest bidder shall be considered. The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to cancel the bid and resell/re-auction the unit.
- Inspection: Any person wishing to inspect the Puti'on Twin Hull may contact the Law Office of Robert T. Torres to request for inspection at least two (2) days prior to inspection.
- All bids are final.



DIVISION OF COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

P.O. Box 501304, Saipan MP 96950, Gualo Rai Center, Saipan
TEL. NO. 664-8300 FAX NO. 664-8315
www.dcrm.gov.mp



NOTICE OF APPLICATION

As of December 3, 2021

THE FOLLOWING IS A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF COASTAL PERMIT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE DCRM OFFICE:

APPLICANT	DATE APPLICATION RECEIVED	APPLICATION PROJECT DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	TYPE	STATUS
Department of Public Lands	10/20/2021 SMS-2001-X-213-A1	Koblerville Homestead Subdivision	Koblerville, Saipan	Major Siting	Certified Complete 11/29/2021
2. Asia Pacific Hotels, Inc. dba Crowne Plaza Saipan	11/12/2021 SSM-2022-005	Renovation of Existing Landscaping & Patio Paving	Garapan, Saipan	Shoreline	Approved* 12/1/2021
3. Marianas Visitors Authority	11/18/2021 SSM-2022-006	18th Annual Christmas in the Marianas	Garapan, Saipan	Shoreline	Approved* 11/29/2021
4. Han Sang Yun dba D K S M Corporation	11/29/2021 TLRM-2022-002	SCUBA Diving Tour Operation/ Instruction	Tachogna Beach, Saipan	Lagoon & Reef	Under Review*
5. Guang Zhe Xuan dba Blue Ocean Corporation	11/29/2021 TLRM-2022-003	SCUBA Diving Tour Operation/ Instruction	Tachogna Beach, Saipan	Lagoon & Reef	Under Review*
6. Commonwealth Ports Authority	11/30/2021 SSPH-2022-008	South Seaplane Ramp Paving & Drainage Project	Lower Base, Saipan	Shoreline, Ports & Industrial	Under Review*
7. LK Corporation dba YSE Engineering	12/1/2021 SS-2022-009	Sugar Dock Facility Soil Investigation	Chalan Kanoa, Saipan	Shoreline	Under Review*

NMIAC §15-10-210 of the CRM Rules and Regulations requires all permit applications to be published in a newspaper for general circulation within the CNMI within 15 days of receipt of application. The list reflects recently received permit applications and those with a recent change in status. New applications are marked with an asterisk (*). The Public is invited to submit written comments regarding any of the above projects for which a permit decision has not been issued. All permit comments should identify the project by application number. Your comments should be mailed or hand-delivered to the DCRM Office. All persons who desire a public hearing regarding any project may do so by submitting a written request for a public hearing to the DCRM Office within fourteen (14) days for minor permits (APCs) and proposed amended major sitings. Public Hearings are required for all new major siting projects. All public hearing notices are published in a local newspaper of general circulation. Residents of Rota and Tinian may submit comments and hearing requests to their local DCRM Coordinator. Persons wishing to retain the right to appeal a DCRM Permit decision must file a notice of appeal with the DCRM office within thirty (30) days of the issuance of the DCRM permit decision as provided in Part 200 § 15-10-235 of the DCRM Regulations.



SAIPAN HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
Office of the Mayor
Municipality of Saipan

PRESS RELEASE: Due to the recent rise of Covid-19 cases and unforeseen circumstances of this pandemic, the SHEFA Board of Directors would like to inform all interested applicants that it will hereby extend the application submission deadline of December 1st, 2021 for an additional 10 days. The amended submission date is now December 15th, 2021. All new and returning applicants are encouraged to submit an application for Spring 2022 on or before the established deadline.

5 in NMH sought for civic reflection facilitation training

The Northern Marianas Humanities Council and Humanities Guåhan will offer a three-day civic reflection facilitation training event for up to five participants from the CNMI. The event is scheduled for Jan. 25-27, 2022, at the Humanities Guåhan's office in Guam and will be conducted by two master trainers from Oregon Humanities.

Individuals who undergo training will learn the methods

of the civic reflection conversational model. According to the Center for Civic Reflection at Salisbury University, civic reflection uses a shared source (such as a poem, image or film) to help groups of people think and talk more deeply about their shared world and differing values and commitments. Trained facilitators act as conversation guides. They explore varied opinions and support participant explana-

tions, rather than moderate discussion.

Individuals that complete the training must commit to co-facilitating a series of six, 90-minute conversations, either online or in-person, with the same group of people over an extended period of time.

"Sustaining a conversation over time using the civic reflection method works to create a safe space where participants feel comfortable to share their perspectives and really address and discuss the issues at hand," said Dr. Kimberlee Kihleng, executive director for Humanities Guåhan. "We're

really looking forward to working with our CNMI partner to engage and encourage our residents to share their experiences and perspectives on important civic issues."

With support from the National Endowment for the Humanities' "A More Perfect Union: America at 250" initiative, the Northern Marianas Humanities Council will sponsor travel related expenses for participants from Saipan, Tinian, and Rota to attend the training on Guam with 15 other participants. Humanities Guåhan will cover the training fee for participants as part of

its Reimagining Guåhan: Social Justice through a Humanities Lens project funded under the same NEH initiative.

"This training should help develop the capacity among our residents to engage in meaningful, civil discourse on topics and issues of interest to our community," said NMHC executive director Leo Pangelinan. "I am excited for this work with Humanities Guåhan and look forward to how these conversations may lead to action or change efforts in our communities."

Residents of the CNMI who are 18 years of age or

older who can commit to the three-day training workshop and co-facilitating a series of conversations among CNMI residents are encouraged to complete an application form online at <http://www.nmh-council.org/civics-app> by Dec. 23, 2021. Applicants selected for this opportunity will be notified of a decision by Jan. 6, 2022. For more information, send your questions to info@nmhcouncil.org or call 670-235-4785.

NMHC is a private, non-profit (Educational Tax Credit eligible) organization established in the CNMI in 1991. (PR)



From left, CNMI chief information officer Clifford Aldan, former Louisiana lieutenant governor and former mayor of New Orleans Mitchell Joseph Landrieu, CNMI Office of the Governor chief of staff Wil Castro, and CNMI Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig.
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

NMI officials attend NGA Infra Summit

Senior CNMI government officials participated Wednesday in the National Governors Association's Infrastructure Summit in Annapolis, Maryland.

The CNMI team—made up of Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig, chief information officer Clifford Aldan, and chief of staff Wil Castro—was among representatives from throughout the country to participate in these discussions about the country's single largest investment in infrastructure.

The three-day event is being attended by governors, state-level senior leadership, federal and NGA partners, as well as industry and public stakeholders. Participants will share resources and discuss implementation of the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. The comprehensive package will provide critical federal funding, support economic growth in the Commonwealth and create more sustainable jobs. The summit covers transportation, broadband, renewable energy,

and resilient infrastructure to name a few.

"The investment empowers the Commonwealth to build back with resilience and through a lens of equity that includes everyone as we work toward economic recovery," said Atalig.

"In addition to building a more resilient critical infrastructure and job creation, we can realize other core benefits, such as government modernization, cybersecurity plan execution, and broadband infrastructure investment with our private sector partners as well," said Aldan.

"We came to learn more about the technicalities of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, to share our unique challenges and opportunities, as well as to request for and secure additional resources where needed. By being here, face to face, we now have a direct line to these federal and state officials that will help our government better integrate and collaborate at all levels," said Castro. (PR)

HOLIDAY GIVEAWAY

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Opinion

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Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
editor@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

The dangers of guns at protests are too big to ignore

Unprisingly, the Kyle Rittenhouse verdict has exposed some fierce divisions among Americans. On one matter, though, there ought to be renewed consensus: It doesn't help to have guns displayed at political rallies and protests.

Although the National Rifle Association likes to say that the only thing that can stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun, the Rittenhouse incident shows how making such distinctions in chaotic or violent situations is impossible. Unfortunately, the fog of war is increasingly a reality on American streets.

When the city of Kenosha was convulsed by violent protests last year, Rittenhouse was roaming the streets with an AR-15-style rifle. He said he was there to protect businesses. Others saw him as an aggressor. Tensions flared and Rittenhouse wound up shooting three people (one who was himself armed with a gun) and killing two. This month, a jury unanimously determined that Rittenhouse had defended himself lawfully. But if the encounter had turned out slightly differently, either of the victims could've had legitimate self-defense claims.

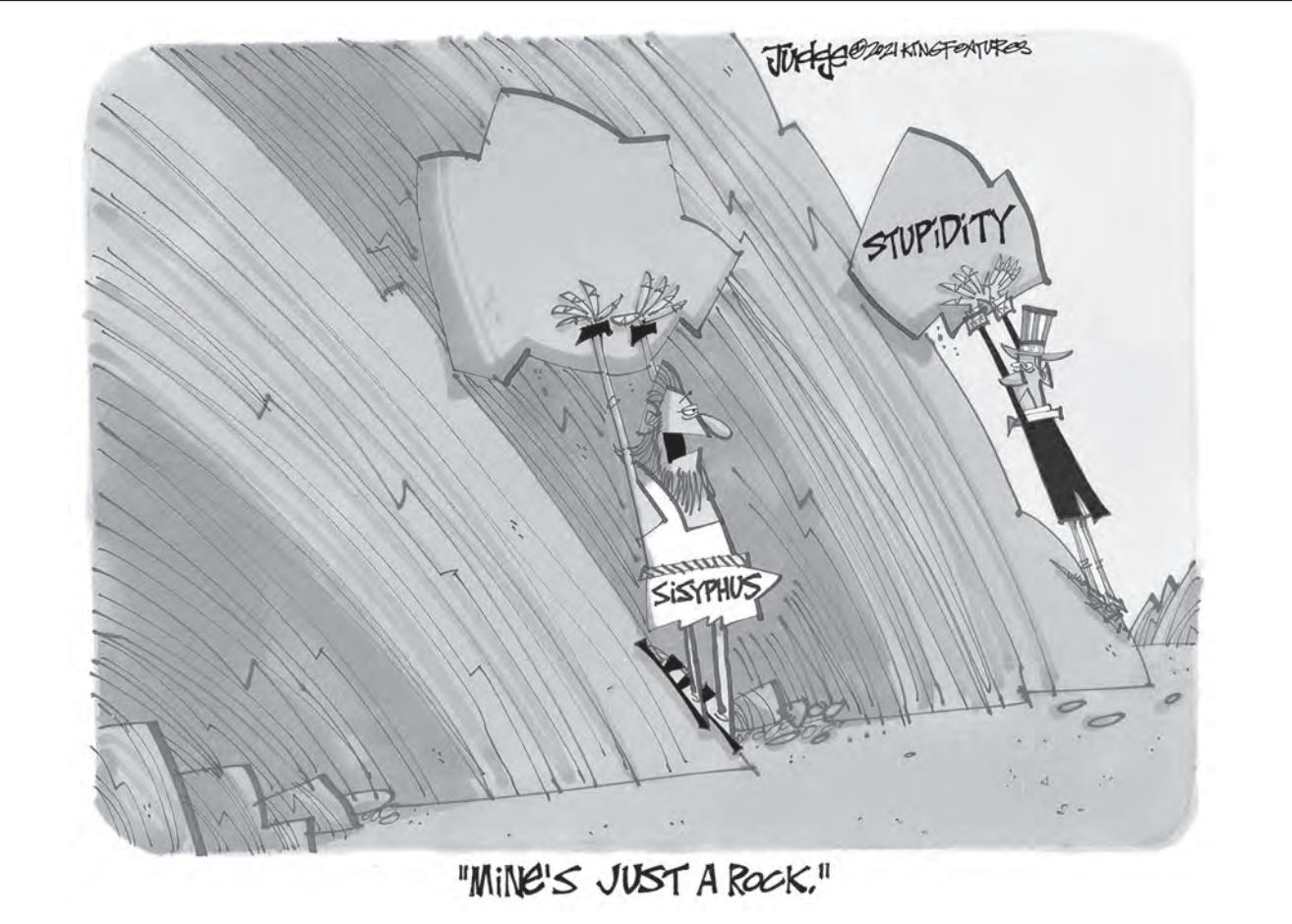
No one should expect this to be the last such incident. Armed demonstrators have become a disturbingly familiar sight at American protests in recent years. A study by the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project and the Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund documented 560 armed protests over an 18-month period in 2020 and 2021. It found that armed protests are nearly six times as likely to turn violent or destructive as unarmed ones. (Michael Bloomberg, the founder and majority owner of Bloomberg LP, is a backer of Everytown.)

These incidents are taking a significant human toll. When armed militias descended on Louisville, Kentucky, during a protest over the fatal police shooting of Breonna Taylor, three people were injured after an accidental firearm discharge. In Portland last year, a pro-Trump demonstrator was shot and killed after a day of clashes between protesting groups. All told, about one in every 62 protests involving firearms results in a fatality.

The National Rifle Association and its elected allies seem to think that this should be the new normal. They want civilians armed to the teeth in state after state, city after city. As awful as that prospect might be, it is nonetheless gaining traction. Twenty-one states now allow the open and concealed carry of firearms without a permit—a status that gun activists call “constitutional carry.” Six states joined that list this year, most recently Texas in September (despite a majority of residents opposing the legislation).

Absent government intervention, this trend suggests that more incidents like Kenosha are all but inevitable. Authorities need to recognize that protests are an inherently charged situation, and that armed citizens are a threat to the First Amendment rights to free speech and assembly

See DANGERS on Next Page



1 in 4 adults are estranged from family and paying a psychological price

Search “toxic parents” on Instagram, and you’ll find more than 38,000 posts, largely urging young adults to cut ties with their families. The idea is to protect one’s mental health from abusive parents. However, as a psychoanalyst, I’ve seen that trend in recent years become a way to manage conflicts in the family, and I have seen the steep toll estrangement takes on both sides of the divide. This is a self-help trend that creates much harm.

Research by Karl Pillemer, a family sociologist and professor of human development at Cornell University, indicates that 1 in 4 American adults have become estranged from their families. I believe that’s an undercount, because others have stopped short of completely cutting off contact but have effectively severed the ties.

“Canceling” your parent can be seen as an extension of a larger cultural trend aimed at correcting imbalances in power and systemic inequality. Certainly the family is one system in which power has never been balanced. In 1933, the Hungarian psychoanalyst Sándor Ferenczi described this dynamic, warning that any asymmetry, even the simple indication that someone has more power than we do, can potentially be traumatic.

Today’s social justice values respond to this reality, calling on us to censure oppressive and harmful figures and to gain power for those who have been powerless. But when adult children use the most effective tool they have—theirself—to gain a sense of security and ban their parents from their lives, the roles are simply flipped, and the trauma only deepens.

Certainly some extreme cases call for cutting parents out of one’s life, even if doing so comes at a psychological cost. Far more often, what I see in my practice are cases of family conflict mismanaged, power dynamics inverted rather than negotiated. I see the shattering effect of that trend: scenarios with no winners, only isolated humans who long to be known and feel safe in the presence of the other.

Some of my patients are young adults who decided to end, or are considering ending, their relationships with their parents. They try to process their parents’ harmful actions in their childhood, their lack of boundaries, and their narcissistic or intrusive behaviors. Those children struggle with anger, pain and guilt and are often feeling confused and lonely.

Other patients are parents on the other side of that dynamic, who feel betrayed and heartbroken. It’s hard for them to acknowledge or even recognize their aggression. In my experience, baby boomer parents are especially troubled. They perceive themselves as products of the 1960s social revolution; many of them rejected their own parents’ authoritarian style and followed a parenting approach that at least appeared to prioritize the chil-

By GALIT ATLAS
Los Angeles Times

Galit Atlas is a psychoanalyst in private practice in Manhattan. She is the author of the forthcoming Emotional Inheritance: A Therapist, Her Patients and the Legacy of Trauma.



dren’s needs. Those patients feel trapped in generational limbo, neglected by their own parents who didn’t fully know them and abandoned by their children who don’t want to know them.

The vein of online advice about “toxic parents” is a self-help therapy approach that aims to empower younger people to give up on their parents and “re-parent” themselves. It encourages them to do the needed emotional work on their own and urges them to reject parental figures altogether, avoiding any kind of dependency on another person.

In this cultural moment, and especially because of COVID disruptions to young careers, adult kids are either becoming more dependent on their parents or are rejecting their dependency altogether. We’re in the era of millennials living in their parents’ basements, and also in the era of millennials cutting their parents out of their lives.

The catch is that after estrangement, adult children are not suddenly less dependent. In fact, they feel abandoned and betrayed, because in the unconscious, it doesn’t matter who is doing the leaving; the feeling that lingers is one of “being left.” They carry the ghosts of their childhood, confronting the emotional reality that those who raised us can never truly be left behind, no matter how hard we try. They live inside us, even without our permission. This is something that can never be canceled.

What I have found is that most of these families need repair, not permanent rupture. How else can one learn how to negotiate needs, to create boundaries and to trust? How else can we love others, and ourselves, if not through accepting the limitations that come with being human? Good relationships are the result not of a perfect level of attunement but rather of successful adjustments.

To pursue dialogue instead of estrangement will be hard and painful work. It can’t be a solitary project of “self-help,” because at the end of the day, real intimacy is achieved through mutual vulnerability and by working through the injuries of the past together. In most cases of family conflict, repair is possible and preferable to estrangement—and it’s worth the work.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Vaccinations and other public health measures will allow residents to move forward

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic. After a year and a half into the pandemic, our preventive measures to mitigate COVID-19 have been working. However, CNMI residents and those around the world have seen our cases rise over the past few weeks. It would be insensitive to say not to panic but being at the forefront of the pandemic makes it easier to educate and provide comforting advice to our residents.

At the beginning of the pandemic when a vaccine was not yet available, my staff and I worked at the airport to monitor arriving passengers and manage their transport to the quarantine facility. Our presence was also a tangible show of leadership to address concerns and make necessary decisions. We went months without community transmission until a short spike in March 2021, when we identified our first cluster. We knew that despite the travel protocols in place, there is always the risk of breakthrough cases entering our islands and spreading rapidly as what we're seeing now. We knew no measures put in place can be perfect but numerous measures can help reduce risks.

The seriousness of the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us that our lives won't be the same for a while, but the public health initiatives have worked over the test of time and we have to depend on it this time too. We wore our masks and stayed six feet apart. These practices helped to ease our fears. With the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine, we feel as-



GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS

sured that there's light at the end of this dark tunnel. The vaccines won't return us to our pre-pandemic lifestyle, but they will offer us significant protection. Please get vaccinated so we can keep each other safe.

We are seeing an increase in hospitalizations and unvaccinated patients take up the majority of that number. The current situation is disheartening because we know that the vaccines are safe and effective in preventing serious complications from the virus. This is especially vital when we have a highly transmissible variant like what we're seeing now.

I get many inquiries about what residents can do to reduce their risks of infection. Besides getting vaccinated and practicing the three W's—wear a mask, wait at a distance, and wash your hands—there are many solutions to ensure safety for everyone. This holiday season, families should consider hosting their gatherings outdoors to reduce their chances of breathing in respiratory droplets containing the virus. Families should also limit interactions with those outside their household and avoid shaking hands with others. We should limit physical touch, sanitize our areas and things we've touched, and practice the three W's. If you're a contact, the first thing to do if you can't get tested right away, is to self-quarantine at home and limit contacts from others. All these measures combined help reduce the risks of COVID-19.

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, the Common-

TOGETHER, WE CAN

By ESTHER L. MUÑA

Special to the *Saipan Tribune*



Esther L. Muña is chief executive officer of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. and has been at the forefront of the COVID-19 pandemic and helping to keep the community safe. Muña serves on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force to strategize protocols and community guidance to mitigate COVID-19.

wealth Healthcare Corp., and the Governor's Office meet daily to strategize how we can continue to keep the community safe. As we reach the end of the year and go into the holidays, it's evident that we would have not made it this far without community-wide cooperation. I'd like to thank our partners—Department of Public Safety, Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Service, Commonwealth Office Transit Authority, and many more to mention—for their efforts in keeping the Marianas safe.

Though we are in an unprecedented situation, I assure you that the community's safety continues to be our top priority.

For more information, visit the GCEA at cnmienconomy.com, on Facebook and Instagram (@cnmigov.economy), or contact them at gceacnmi@gmail.com.

Medical bias can be deadly. Our research found a way to curb it

Ask most any woman about her experience with the American health care system and you will likely hear stories of medical maltreatment in the form of dismissal, undertreatment or incorrect diagnosis. Add racial bias to the mix and a woman's likelihood of being victimized in medicine is even worse.

In the largest study of its kind to date, a 2020 analysis of more than 3 million U.S. patients' hospital admissions between 2012 and 2017 found that adults who are Black or from other underrepresented racial or ethnic groups received up to 10% fewer early treatments for heart problems than white patients. Medical bias according to race and gender is so powerful that even mega stars like Serena Williams have nearly died from it.

Institutions including medical schools and hospitals have responded to the problem of bias with implicit bias training—the use of cognitive techniques to make people aware of their internalized assumptions about race and gender. But the data show that it doesn't work. Being taught directly about one's own internalized assumptions unfortunately doesn't seem to alter behavior. So, what can we do about bias that is unconscious, pervasive and threatens the lives of millions of Americans?

In a study published recently in the journal *Nature Communications*, my colleagues and I discovered a surprisingly effective answer: an online group reasoning technique known

as networked collective intelligence, which basically means getting doctors to exchange treatment options with one another. Think of it as a group chat for specialists.

We asked more than 800 practicing clinicians to provide treatment recommendations for either a white male or a Black female patient—portrayed by an actor in a video presentation—showing identical risk factors for cardiac disease. Initially, the Black female patient was over 200% more likely than the white male patient to be sent home rather than receive the guideline recommended care, which is referral to the emergency department.

So far, we had simply confirmed what the data from thousands of past cases had long established: There are significant disparities in doctors' recommendations for patients of varying race and gender who present with identical risk factors.

Then things got interesting. We divided the clinicians into groups. A control group was given time to reflect in solitude on their decisions, as is standard practice in medical training, before getting the opportunity to revise their recommendations. Clinicians in the experimental group, meanwhile, had the same opportunity to revise their initial recommendations after contemplation. However, rather than doing so in solitude, they were able to exchange opinions within an "egalitarian" peer-to-peer network that makes the most of multiple doctors' expertise.

Our control group of clinicians showed no decline in bias. In fact, the only change we saw was a doubling in the rate of overtreatment for both patients, in the form of an unnecessary and risky surgical intervention. In peer networks, however, clinicians showed a remarkable shift. The rate at which the Black female patient was sent home dropped by 50%, while recommendations for the guideline-recommended treatment more than doubled.

The effects of bias on patient treatment vanished. There was no longer any disparity in care for the Black female and white male patients. Moreover, the rate of dangerous overtreatment for both the white male and Black female patient also dropped by half.

So how did it work?

In traditional medicine, physicians follow a strict hierarchy based on seniority, in which the most senior person has disproportionate influence over everyone else. Picture these

By DAMON CENTOLA

Los Angeles Times



Damon Centola is a senior fellow at the Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics, professor of communication, sociology, and engineering at the University of Pennsylvania and author, most recently, of *Change: How to Make Big Things Happen*.

networks as a fireworks explosion with the most senior person at the center. These networks do not foster an exchange of ideas. Instead, they act as a broadcast system for the beliefs and biases of the senior members. Those biases flow through the network to younger clinicians, who pass them on without any conscious recognition of bias.

Egalitarian networks, by contrast, shift knowledge and power from the individual to the collective. If the old hierarchies promote information like fireworks coming from a central source, peer-to-peer networks are structured like fishing nets with each point in the web connected directly to only a few others. The same people are in the network—junior and senior alike—but the structure makes everyone equal, filtering out errors on both sides and preventing any one person's biases from dominating. In other words, the shift in clinicians' recommendations was driven by the wisdom of the crowd.

While no single discovery or innovation can eradicate race and gender bias from medicine, using egalitarian networks to improve medical care could spark a badly needed paradigm shift, where we train future clinicians to seek answers through peer problem-solving networks rather than deferring to seniority. We have known for some time that biased norms in health care are reinforced and strengthened by traditional medical networks. But clinical networks can improve upon the traditional logic of medical authority by relying on collective intelligence, which can reduce flaws in clinical reasoning in a way individual approaches cannot.

It is long since time for the medical establishment to meet the modern era, stop viewing clinical reasoning as an individual act and use group reasoning to improve patient care.

DANGERS

From Page 10

they're meant to express. State and local governments have many options for restricting firearms at demonstrations that are perfectly compatible with the Second Amendment, including enforcing existing laws against intimidation and menacing, prohibiting armed militias from attending such events, and banning open carry at sensitive places.

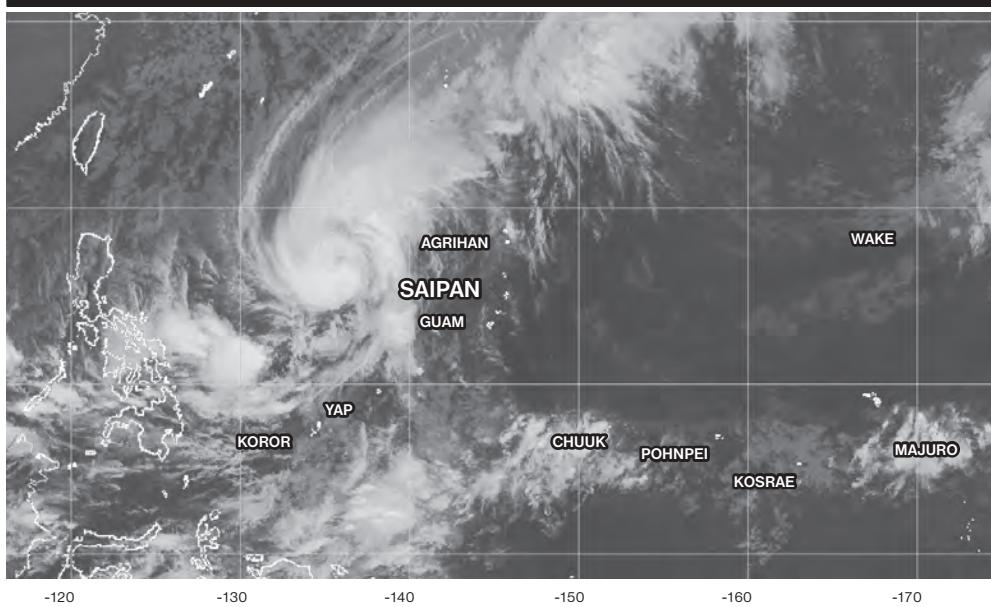
They should do everything in their power to enact common-sense reforms—before the next protest leads to the next round of needless bloodshed.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Partly cloudy with a 10 percent chance of showers. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph becoming light and variable Friday night.	Partly cloudy with a 10 percent chance of showers. Northeast winds 5 to 10 mph.	Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
85°	76°	87°	78°	87°
87°	78°	87°	78°	87°
87°	78°	87°	78°	87°
87°	78°	87°	78°	87°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:18 AM, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2021

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite imagery this morning shows partly cloudy skies across the Marianas and radar shows a few showers southeast of the Marianas. Ipan buoy is reporting seas around 6 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html>
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Limiting visitors

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
- Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
- Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 sec-



CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 InfoLine at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mp, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at <http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html> and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Source: Office of the Governor

MICRONESIA		
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Yap	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:28 AM	5:45 PM
Saturday	6:28 AM	5:45 PM
Sunday	6:29 AM	5:45 PM
Monday	6:29 AM	5:45 PM
Tuesday	6:30 AM	5:46 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	4:56 AM	4:42 PM	-
Saturday	6:02 AM	5:38 PM	-
Sunday	7:11 AM	6:40 PM	-
Monday	8:19 AM	7:46 PM	-
Tuesday	9:23 AM	8:52 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE		
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	72° / 59°
Beijing	Sunny	45° / 21°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	73° / 63°
Honolulu	Showers	82° / 73°
London	Sunny	43° / 34°
Los Angeles	Sunny	73° / 53°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	90° / 77°
Melbourne	Rain	66° / 55°
Miami	Mostly Sunny	78° / 71°
New York	Showers	53° / 36°
Osaka	Sunny	52° / 39°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	39° / 28°
Busan	Mostly Sunny	48° / 36°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	55° / 39°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	70° / 54°
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	59° / 48°
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	45° / 32°
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	50° / 39°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	54° / 34°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY FEET	
12:29 AM	Low Tide
7:13 AM	High Tide
12:34 PM	Low Tide
6:02 PM	High Tide

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 12, 2021

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	7:20am	8:05am	2, 4, 6	UA116	5:30am	6:16am	2, 4, 6
UA117	9:50am	10:35am	1, 3, 5, 7	UA174	8:00am	8:46am	1, 3, 5, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
UA183	8:00pm	9:50pm	Daily	UA184	10:40pm	4:30am+1	2, 5
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				UA184	10:55pm	4:45am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA117/183	7:20am	9:50pm	2, 4, 6 via Guam	UA184/174	10:40pm	6:16am+1	5 via Guam
UA117/183	9:50am	9:50pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via Guam	UA184/174	10:40pm	8:46am+1	2 via Guam
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				UA184/174	10:55pm	6:16am+1	1, 3 via Guam
7C3406	3:10PM	6:55PM	6	UA184/174	10:55pm	8:46am+1	4, 6, 7 via Guam
TW9308	3:20PM	8:00PM	4, 5	7C3405	8:30AM	2:10PM	6
OZ6243	4:00PM	7:40PM	6	OZ6233	9:00AM	2:30PM	6
INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN				TW9307	10:00AM	2:20PM	4, 5

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. (The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 18, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE</td		



McDonald's of Guam & Saipan 1st Annual Ronald McDonald House Charities® Golf Tournament



LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort, West Course
Saturday, December 11, 2021

Showtime 6:00 AM • Shotgun Start 7:00 AM • Format: Medal Play



LAOLAO BAY
GOLF & RESORT

TOURNAMENT PRIZES

All Categories Champ: A Flight • B Flight • C Flight • Seniors • Super Seniors • Ladies

First Place \$500 | Second Place \$300 | Third Place \$200

<p>2021 LEXUS NX <small>Sponsored by Atkins Kroll</small></p>	<p>2022 MITSUBISHI OUTLANDER SE <small>Sponsored by Triple J Motors</small></p>	<p>\$10,000 CASH <small>Sponsored by Bank of Saipan</small></p>	<p>\$10,000 CASH <small>Sponsored by UER [United Equipment Rental]</small></p>
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PRIZE VEHICLE MAY NOT BE EXACTLY AS SHOWN

DIAMOND SPONSORS



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Tan Siu Lin Foundation

UNITED EQUIPMENT RENTAL



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SILVER SPONSORS



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Business

Calvo's campaign encourages residents to thank those they count on

HAGĀTÑA, Guam—Calvo's Insurance has launched a holiday-themed contest as an extension of its Count on Us for Life campaign.

Calvo's is giving the community the opportunity to recognize friends, family, or people whom they can count on in good times and especially challenging times.

"The Count on Us for Life campaign was created to connect people. During this holiday season, we'd like to recognize those who have selflessly shown up for others in need," said Paul A. Calvo, president and CEO of Calvo's Insurance Underwriters. "We can honor those who have impacted our lives in big or small ways through their acts of service and kindness. Usually, these values begin at home and emanate out to others."

Residents have many ways to play and win. What makes the contest unique is that the nominator also wins a prize in addition to the person who was nominated. Residents can

WEEKLY GIVEAWAY

KUAM's The Link Promotion

Now through Dec. 17 on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, The Link's hosts will open the phone line to callers, who will have to answer the questions "Who can you count on in good and challenging

times?" and "How were you able to count on this person?"

Listeners who call in and answer the questions will win the weekly giveaways.

TKTB Megamixx 101.9 Radio Promotion

Now through Dec. 17, during the Radio Breakfast Extreme with DJ Doods from 6am to am and PnP: The Afternoon Shift with DJ Arnold from 12pm to 3pm, the radio host will open the phone line for callers. Callers will have to answer the same questions to win the weekly giveaways.

Social Media - @calvosinsurance

Now through Dec. 17, every



A family celebration scene in the Calvo's Insurance Count On Us For Life TV commercial.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Monday, Calvo's will publish a promo post on Facebook and Instagram asking the community the question, "Who can you count on in good and challenging times? Tell us how you were able to count on this person." Followers can like and comment on the post for a chance to win weekly prizes.

Each week on both radio stations and Calvo's social media pages, Calvo's is giving away a weekly prize package that includes a Calvo's Lifestyle Club Partner gift certificate and a \$25 gas certificate. Weekly winners who are Calvo's customers can fill out an online entry form at calvos.com/giveaway by Dec. 17 for a chance to win a grand prize.

Three Festive Grand Prizes

At the end of the contest period, Calvo's will determine three winners from the online entries. The three grand prizes include the following:

- A family staycation for a two-night stay at the Lotte Hotel with all meals included for one lucky winner. The nominator wins \$300 worth of Lone Star gift certificates.
- Two shopping sprees at Pay-Less Supermarkets for two lucky winners. Winners must complete the shopping spree within three minutes, and the prize value is up to \$1,000 worth of items per spree. The two nominators will win \$250 Payless and \$250 Shell gas

certificates each.

The contest is open to all Guam residents ages 18 years and older. No purchase or payment is necessary. Additional terms and conditions apply. Visit calvos.com for complete rules. Limit one entry per person for the grand prize. Winners will be announced on Dec. 20, 2021, on the Calvo's Insurance social media pages.

"There isn't a better time to recognize acts of kindness than during the holidays. We know residents will have fun winning these incredible prizes while honoring those they can count on," Calvo said. "The prizes are great for families, and we are sure they will bring holiday cheer to our winners!" (PR)

PUBLIC NOTICE



This is to inform the public that Erwin N. Repulda is no longer connected with Yano Enterprises, Inc. dba Kinpachi Japanese Restaurant, Effective Date: November 29, 2021.

Any transaction made or entered by him after the above-mentioned date will no longer be honored by the company.

For any questions or concerns, please call our office at (670) 234-6900.

NOTICE OF ISSUANCE OF A QUALIFYING CERTIFICATE

ON AN APPLICATION FOR A QUALIFYING CERTIFICATE AUTHORIZING THE ABATEMENT AND REBATE OF CERTAIN CNMI TAXES

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that:

CNMI Governor Ralph DLG. Torres, on December 1, 2021, approved and issued Qualifying Certificate No. QC 2021-01 for Marshall Holdings CNMI LLC ("the Beneficiary").

Address: The Address of the Beneficiary is *Marina Heights Business Park, Puerto Rico, Municipality of Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands 96950*.

Investment: The Beneficiary will invest approximately \$6,447 million for solar energy production, inter-island ocean transport, import/export, and eco-tourism, in the municipality of Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands 96950

/s/ Manuel A. Sablan
Executive Director

Pursuant to Qualifying Certificate Rules & Regulations, this ad is paid by the Beneficiary

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

MAIN OFFICE: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2ND FLOOR ARRIVAL BLDG.
P.O. BOX 501055, SAIPAN, MP 96950
PHONE: (1-670) 237-6500/1 | FAX: (1-670) 234-5962
WEBSITE: WWW.CNMIIMPORTS.COM

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS FOR CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES

FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAI PAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ARFF RAPID REFILL IMPROVEMENTS AIP 3-69-0002-93/XX

The Commonwealth Ports Authority's (CPA) is a public corporation and autonomous agency of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). In accordance with its Procurement Rules and Regulations, CPA hereby seeks the services of qualified consulting firms to provide Construction Management Services for the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport ARFF Rapid Refill Improvements Project, AIP 3-69-0002-93/XX.

The project is being funded by U.S. Federal Aviation Administration and is in accordance and compliance with CPA's Procurement Rules and Regulations, Section 40-50-202, Architect-Engineer Design and Construction Management Services.

The Request for Qualification (RFQ) Package is available at CPA's Administration Office, 2nd floor of the arrival terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. No fee is required for obtaining the RFQ package. Electronic copies may be made available upon written request to Ms. Angie Aguiqui at angie.aguiqui@cnmiports.com or Ms. Wendi Prater at wprater@cnmiports.com.

Questions regarding this request for qualification statements must be submitted to Ms. Wendi L. Prater, CPA Executive Assistant/Project Manager, via email to wprater@cnmiports.com or hand delivered to the CPA Administration Office by no later than 5:00 p.m. CHST, local time, Monday, December 20, 2021.

The statements of professional qualification will be evaluated based on the criteria available in the RFQ package.

Interested Consultants are requested to submit one (1) original, four (4) copies and one (1) electronic version in .pdf of their statements of professional qualifications no later than **5:00 p.m. CHST, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2022**. Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest.

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Date: December 2, 2021

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

MAIN OFFICE: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2ND FLOOR ARRIVAL BLDG.
P.O. BOX 501055, SAIPAN, MP 96950
PHONE: (1-670) 237-6500/1 | FAX: (1-670) 234-5962
WEBSITE: WWW.CNMIIMPORTS.COM

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS FOR ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING DESIGN SERVICES

FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAI PAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT PERIMETER SECURITY FENCE REPLACEMENT PROJECT NO. CPA-SA-002-22 (AIP PENDING)

The Commonwealth Ports Authority's (CPA) is a public corporation and autonomous agency of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). In accordance with its Procurement Rules and Regulations, CPA is soliciting statements of professional qualifications from interested Consultants for Architectural and Engineering (A/E) Design Services for the replacement of the perimeter security fencing at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, Project No. CPA-SA-002-22 (AIP pending).

The project is being funded by U.S. Federal Aviation Administration and is in accordance and compliance with CPA's Procurement Rules and Regulations, Section 40-50-202, Architect-Engineer Design and Construction Management Services.

The Request for Qualification (RFQ) Package is available at CPA's Administration Office, 2nd floor of the arrival terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. No fee is required for obtaining the proposal package. Electronic copies may be made available upon written request to Ms. Wendi Prater at wprater@cnmiports.com or Ms. Angie Aguiqui at angie.aguiqui@cnmiports.com.

Questions regarding this request for RFQ statements must be submitted to Ms. Prater, CPA's Executive Assistant/Project Manager, via email to wprater@cnmiports.com or hand delivered to the CPA Administration Office by no later than 5:00 p.m. CHST, local time, Monday, December 20, 2021.

The statements of professional qualification will be evaluated based on the criteria available in the RFQ package.

Interested Consultants are requested to submit one (1) original, four (4) copies and one (1) electronic version in .pdf of their statements of professional qualifications no later than **5:00 p.m. CHST, TUESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2022**. Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest.

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Date: December 2, 2021

Nation

Michigan teen, 15, charged in Oxford High School shooting

OXFORD TOWNSHIP,

Mich. (AP)—The parents of a teenager accused of killing four students at a Michigan school were summoned to discuss his behavior just a few hours before the violence, a sheriff said.

The disclosure was made Wednesday as Ethan Crumbley, 15, was charged as an adult with two dozen crimes, including murder, attempted murder and terrorism for a shooting Tuesday at Oxford High School in Oakland County.

"He deliberately brought the handgun that day with the intent to murder as many students as he could," assistant prosecutor Marc Keast said while successfully arguing for no bail for Crumbley and a transfer to jail from a juvenile facility.

No motive was offered. But prosecutor Karen McDonald said the shooting was pre-meditated, based on a "mountain of digital evidence" against Crumbley.

Investigators found that he had recorded a video the night before the bloodshed in which he discussed killing students, Lt. Tim Willis of

the sheriff's office said.

"This was not just an impulsive act," McDonald told reporters.

During his arraignment, Crumbley replied, "Yes, I do," when asked if he understood the charges. Defense attorney Scott Kozak entered a plea of not guilty.

Earlier, Sheriff Mike Bouchard told reporters that Crumbley's parents were called to the school Tuesday "for behavior in the classroom that was concerning."

The teen remained in school, however, and the shooting occurred a few hours later.

Bouchard didn't say what had worried school officials. He said investigators believe the gun was already in the 1,700-student school.

"There is nothing that he could have faced that would warrant senseless, absolutely brutal violence on other kids," the sheriff said, noting that Crumbley had an additional 18 rounds of ammunition when he was arrested.

In court, Keast said Crumbley entered a bathroom with a backpack and came out with a semi-automatic handgun,

firing at students while moving down the hallway. The four students who were killed were 16-year-old Tate Myre, 14-year-old Hana St. Juliana and Madisyn Baldwin and Justin Shilling, both 17.

Three students were in hospitals Wednesday night, including a 17-year-old girl in critical condition, the sheriff's office said. Others who were injured were discharged.

Deputies rushed to the school around lunchtime Tuesday and captured Crumbley within minutes of the shooting. His father bought the 9 mm Sig Sauer gun last week, according to the sheriff.

It was the deadliest school shooting since the Santa Fe, Texas, High School massacre in 2018, according to The Associated Press/USA TODAY/Northeastern University Mass Killings database. The U.S. has had 31 mass killings this year of which 28 involved firearms.

McDonald said charges were being considered against Crumbley's parents.

"Owning a gun means securing it properly and locking it and keeping the ammunition separate," she said.

US reports 1st case of omicron variant in returning traveler

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—

The U.S. recorded its first confirmed case of the omicron variant Wednesday—in a vaccinated traveler

who returned to California after a trip to South Africa—as scientists around the world race to establish whether the new, mutant version of the coronavirus is

a vaccinated traveler

who returned to California after a trip to South Africa—as scientists around the world race to establish whether the new, mutant version of the coronavirus is

more dangerous than previous ones.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the

United States' top infectious-disease expert, announced the

finding at the White House.

"We knew it was just a matter of time before the first case of omicron would be detected in the United States," he said.

The infected person was identified as a traveler who had returned from South Africa on Nov. 22, developed mild symptoms and tested positive for COVID-19 Monday. Researchers at the University of California, San



Fauci

Francisco obtained a sample from the patient Tuesday evening and worked feverishly overnight to assemble the genetic sequence.

The person, who had had the full two doses of the Moderna vaccine and wasn't yet due for a booster shot, is improving, California officials said.

Fauci and other medical experts strongly emphasized that Americans should continue to get vaccinated and get their booster shots. The vaccine has been proven to reduce the risk of severe illness and death,

and Fauci said it is reasonable to believe it will offer protection against the omicron variant.

The mild nature of the California person's infection "is a testimony to the importance of the vaccinations," said California Health Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly.

All the individual's close contacts have been reached

and have tested negative, officials said. The patient, who agreed to remain in quarantine, was identified only as being between 18 and 49.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom expressed confidence in the state's efforts to control the virus and said he does not anticipate imposing another stay-at-home order or other shutdown measures.

At least 23 other countries have reported omicron infections since South African authorities first identified the variant a week ago—an announcement that led the U.S. and many other nations to almost immediately bar airline travelers arriving from southern Africa.

In South Africa, new cases of COVID-19 nearly doubled in a single day to almost 8,600, authorities reported Wednesday, and the country's National Institute for Communicable Diseases said omicron has now overtaken the delta variant among samples now being analyzed at the genetic level.



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation



JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

JVA No. 22 – 029

Opening Date: November 30, 2021
Closing Date: December 14, 2021

POSITION TITLE:
DEPARTMENT:
LOCATION:
ANNUAL SALARY:
CONTRACT:
POSITION(S):

Human Resources Technician, Senior
COA/Human Resources
Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, USA
\$24,904.00 - \$33,620.00 per annum, Non-Exempt
Not Contracted
One (1)

The incumbent will be under the direct supervision of the Human Resources Manager or his/her designee.

Duties:

- Provides specialized administrative and paraprofessional human resources support services related to recruitment, employment testing, classification, compensation, benefits and training.
- Responds to inquiries and provides assistance of internal staff, external customers and vendors.
- Responds to questions and information requests and provides technical assistance, guidance and support regarding programs, services, policies and/or procedures.
- Performs research and verifies information; performs calculations; processes timekeeping information; compiles and maintains data for audit purposes.
- May process job vacancy announcements, schedule and conduct pre-employment testing and assist in employment interview process.
- Enters, updates and maintains employee data in information system; assists in streamlining processes and data collection procedures.
- May serve as open records custodian.
- Prepares and routes documents, certifications, meeting minutes, forms, correspondence, and information tracking documents; monitors and maintains schedules, files, logs, reports, and records; processes and distributes forms, applications and documents.
- Monitors and maintains office supplies, inventory and equipment needs; initiates purchase requisitions and tracks orders.
- Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:

Education: High School Diploma or GED or ABE Program AS and 3 years of office/human resource related experience; or, an equivalent combination of education and experience sufficient to successfully perform the essential duties of the job such as those listed above, unless otherwise subject to any other requirements set forth in law or regulation.

Knowledge of: Applicable Federal, Commonwealth and local laws, codes, regulations and/or ordinances; Education and training; Human Resource principles and practices; Program administration principles; Customer service principles; Mathematical concepts; Research methods; Database and records management principles; Modern office technology.

Skills in: Interpreting and applying applicable laws, codes, regulations and standards; Providing customer service; Responding to information requests and providing specialized administrative support; Researching and verifying information; Compiling data and processing timekeeping information; Scheduling and coordinating appointments; Filing, organizing, imaging and maintaining records and files; Preparing reports, minutes, correspondence and documentation; Managing time and prioritizing requests; Proofreading documents and forms for accuracy and completion; Performing audits, identifying errors, making corrections and recommendations; Reviewing and researching database information; Monitoring and maintaining supplies; Maintaining confidentiality of records and employment information; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

Licensing: Valid Driver's License with appropriate class.

Physical Demands: Occasional lifting of objects. Subject to standing, walking, sitting, bending, reaching, kneeling, pushing and pulling.

All applicants may be tested and all applicants are subject to pre-employment drug test.

How to Apply: Submit a completed CUC Employment Application, resume, and applicable supporting documents to the CUC Human Resources office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan, Monday through Friday 7:30 am – 4:30 pm (Except Legal Holidays). Applicants on the island of Tinian and Rota may submit their documents to their respective CUC Administration office. Application, resume and supporting documents can also be e-mailed to: employment.applications@cucgov.org

P. O. Box 501220, Third Floor, Joeten Dandan Building, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 664-4282 • Fax: (670) 235-5131
CUC is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation



JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

JVA No. 22 – 030

Opening Date: December 1, 2021
Closing Date: December 15, 2021

POSITION TITLE:
DEPARTMENT:
LOCATION:
ANNUAL SALARY:
CONTRACT:
POSITION(S):

Trades Assistant
Water Division
Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, USA
\$16,742.00 - \$22,602.00 per annum, Non-Exempt
Not Contracted
One (1)

The incumbent will be under the direct supervision of the Drinking Water & Wastewater Division Manager or his/her designee.

Duties:

- Assists with installations, repairs and general maintenance in assigned service area; operates motorized vehicles, equipment machinery, and hand and power tools.
- Performs routine and preventative maintenance on equipment, vehicles, systems and/or infrastructure; performs basic inspections; and conducts basic troubleshooting of issues.
- Responds to trouble calls as needed.
- Prepares job site for work including gathering and setting up materials and supplies, and setting work safety barriers for protection and to direct traffic flow away from work site.
- Gathers, cleans and returns equipment, materials and supplies used.
- Cleans and maintains work site after project or repair work is complete.
- Monitors equipment; takes readings and collects data; documents equipment readings; prepares and submits data and work reports.
- Performs inventory spot checks to ensure adequate materials and supplies are available for daily maintenance activities.
- Performing daily well and pump station facility maintenance, cleaning and monitoring;
- Assisting plumbing and chlorine maintenance crew;
- Utilizing digging equipment for locating and repairing leaks;
- Repairing and securing pressure reducer valves, main valves, service lines and laterals, and booster pumps;
- Assisting with meter installation and repair;
- Collecting water samples.
- Must be able to lift objects weighing at 40 lbs. or more.
- Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

Minimum Requirements:

Education: High School Diploma or GED or ABE Program AS Diploma.

Knowledge of: Customer service principles; Basic mathematical concepts; Safety procedures and safe work practices; Modern office technology.

Skills in: Providing customer service; Reading maps and drawings; Operating heavy and light equipment machinery, hand and power tools required of assigned area; Adhering to safety procedures and safe work practices; Prioritizing tasks and managing time for efficiency; Identifying issues and solving problems; Providing attention to detail; Taking equipment readings and recording data; Maintaining activity logs and reports; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

Licensing:

o Valid CNMI Driver's License with appropriate class.

All applicants may be tested and all applicants are subject to pre-employment drug test.

How to Apply: Submit a completed CUC Employment Application, resume, and applicable supporting documents to the CUC Human Resources office located on the 3rd Floor of the Joeten Dandan Building on Saipan, Monday through Friday 7:30 am – 4:30 pm (Except Legal Holidays). Applicants on the island of Tinian and Rota may submit their documents to their respective CUC Administration office. Application, resume and supporting documents can also be e-mailed to: employment.applications@cucgov.org

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Asia

US defense chief slams China's drive for hypersonic weapons

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin said Thursday that China's pursuit of hypersonic weapons "increases tensions in the region" and vowed the U.S. would maintain its capability to deter potential threats posed by China.



Austin

Austin made the remarks in Seoul following annual security talks with his South Korean counterpart that focused on challenges from China and North Korea and other issues facing the allies.

"We have concerns about

the military capabilities that the PRC continues to pursue. Again, the pursuit of those capabilities increases tensions in the region," Austin said referring to China's latest hypersonic weapons test in July and using the abbreviation for the People's Republic of China, the country's official name.

"It just underscores why we consider the PRC to be our pacing challenge," Austin said. "We'll continue to maintain the capabilities to defend and deter against a range of potential threats from the PRC

to ourselves and to our allies."

China's growing military muscle and its drive to end American predominance in Asia has triggered unease in Washington. China's efforts to accelerate its military capabilities were highlighted by its July test of a hypersonic weapon capable of partially orbiting the Earth before reentering the atmosphere and gliding on a maneuverable path to its target.

Experts say the weapons system is clearly designed with a purpose of evading U.S. missile defenses, although China insisted it was testing a reusable space vehicle, not a missile.

ASIA BRIEFS

South Korea breaks daily virus record for 2nd straight day

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea broke its daily record for coronavirus infections for a second straight day on Thursday with more than 5,200 new cases, as pressure mounted on a health care system grappling with rising hospitalizations and deaths. The rapid delta-driven spread comes amid the emergence of the new omicron variant, which is seen as potentially more contagious than previous strains of the virus, and has fueled concerns about prolonged pandemic suffering. South Korea confirmed its first five omicron cases Wednesday night linked to arrivals from Nigeria, prompting the government to tighten its border controls.

Japan coast guard rescues man a day after his boat capsizes

TOKYO (AP)—A 69-year-old man drifted in choppy waters for nearly a day while clinging to the bottom of his capsized boat until he was saved by the coast guard, officials said Wednesday. The man, whose name has not been released, was the only one on the boat, the No. 5 Takamaru, when it capsized off the southern Japanese resort island of Yakushima on Saturday, the coast guard said. After receiving a call from his colleagues, coast guard rescuers searched for him for nearly a day before spotting him in rough seas about 30 kilometers (18 miles) southeast of the place he disappeared, it said. Televised video of the rescue, provided by the coast guard, showed the man, who had a plastic sheet wrapped around him, sitting on the bottom of his capsized boat while clinging to its propeller.

Japan retracts new flight bookings ban after criticisms

TOKYO (AP)—Japan says it has retracted a ban on new incoming international flight bookings to defend against the new variant of the coronavirus only a day after the policy was announced, following criticisms that it was an overreaction. The transport ministry on Wednesday issued a request to international airlines to stop taking new reservations for flights coming into Japan until the end of December as an emergency precaution to defend against the new omicron variant. The ministry said Thursday it has retracted the request after receiving criticisms that the ban was too strict and tantamount to abandoning its own people.

New Zealand to send military, police to Solomon Islands

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—New Zealand will send up to 65 military and police

personnel to the Solomon Islands in the coming days after rioting and looting broke out there last week over several issues, including concerns about the country's increasing links with China. New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said Wednesday she was "deeply concerned" by the civil unrest that unfolded in the capital, Honiara, and wanted to help restore peace and stability. The New Zealand deployment follows similar actions from Australia, Papua New Guinea and Fiji after the Solomon Islands government requested international help. Solomon Islands police found three bodies in a burned-out building and arrested more than 100 people amid the violence.

Despite variants, Singapore's COVID-19 strategy on track

SINGAPORE (AP)—When Singapore embarked upon its strategy of living with COVID-19, backed by one of the world's leading vaccine programs, the wealthy city-state saw a spike in its rate of infections, leading many to question whether the time was right. But with the numbers now dropping as rapidly as they rose, there's cautious optimism that the widely watched plan has helped Singapore turn the corner in the pandemic, even with the discovery of the new worrisome omicron variant, and provide a better understanding of what is effective, and what isn't. "I guess now COVID seems like it's just a normal flu to everybody," said Glacier Chong, taking a break from shopping on Singapore's popular Orchard Road to people-watch by a fountain and listen to the Christmas music being piped out of large speakers lining the street.

Laos-China railway to launch as debt to Beijing mounts

BEIJING (AP)—Laos, a nation of 7 million people wedged between China, Vietnam and Thailand, is opening a \$5.9 billion Chinese-built railway that links China's own poor southwest to foreign markets but piles on potentially risky debt. The line through lush tropical mountains from the Laotian capital, Vientiane, to Kunming is one of hundreds of projects under Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative to expand trade by building ports, railways and other facilities across Asia, Africa and the Pacific. The 1,035-kilometer (642-mile) line opens this week to cargo but no regular passengers due to anti-pandemic travel curbs. Poor countries welcome China's initiative. But the projects are financed by loans from Chinese state-owned banks that must be repaid. Some borrowers complain Chinese-built projects are too expensive and leave too much debt.

World



Villagers leave their homes in the rain, carrying their belongings on donkeys, near the village of Chenna Teklehaymanot, in the Amhara region of northern Ethiopia, on Sept. 9, 2021. AP

UN: Soaring humanitarian needs in the world in 2022

GENEVA (AP)—The United Nations is predicting that a record 274 million people—who together would amount to the world's fourth most populous country—will require emergency humanitarian aid next year in countries like Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Myanmar, Syria and Yemen which face a raft of challenges including war, insecurity, hunger, climate change and the coronavirus pandemic.

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, in its annual overview of future needs, is projecting a 17% jump in the number of people who will need urgent assistance in 2022, and is appealing to donors to provide a record \$41 billion to help 183 million people who are the most in need.

"The climate crisis is hitting the world's most vulnerable people first and worst. Protracted conflicts grind on, and instability has worsened in several parts of the world, notably Ethiopia, Myanmar and Afghanistan," said

Martin Griffiths, the head of OCHA. "The pandemic is not over, and poor countries are deprived of vaccines."

The appeal pulls together needs from an array of U.N. agencies and their partners, and is likely to fall short of its ambitions. This year, donors provided over \$17 billion for projects in last year's Global Humanitarian Overview from OCHA, but funding has been less than half of the U.N. request for 2021.

This year, Griffiths said, "we reached 70 percent of the people that we wanted to. We're aware that we're not going to get the \$41 billion, much as we will try hard."

The overview lays out country-specific plans for 30 countries, half of them in Africa, and most of the rest in the Middle East or Latin America.

Griffiths cited estimates by the U.N.'s Food and Agricultural Organization that 45 million people are at risk of famine, in dozens of countries.

"Humanitarian aid mat-

ters," said Griffiths. "We were able to stop famine affecting half a million people in southern Sudan ... we delivered health care to 10 million people in Yemen ... we've helped vaccinate millions in Myanmar."

OCHA says more than 24 million people require life-saving assistance in Afghanistan, driven by conflict, political turmoil, the coronavirus, economic shocks and the worst drought in more than a generation.

"We never left Afghanistan. And we are there now with a projected program for 2022, three times the size of the program for 2021—because of the various needs and circumstances that you know so well," he said.

That appeared to be an allusion to the ouster of the internationally-backed Afghan government by Taliban fighters in August, and surge of humanitarian needs in the country—including the fight against famine and hunger—since then.

WORLD BRIEFS

Explosion of WWII bomb in Munich injures 4, disrupts trains

BERLIN (AP)—A World War II bomb exploded at a construction site next to a busy railway line in Munich on Wednesday, injuring four people, one of them seriously, German authorities said. A column of smoke was seen rising from the site near the Donnersbergerbruecke station. The construction site for a new commuter train line is located on the approach to Munich's central station, which is a bit over a kilometer (about a half-mile) to the east. Trains to and from that station, one of Germany's busiest, were suspended but service resumed in mid-afternoon. A few local trains were evacuated. The fire service said there was no damage to the tracks.

Volcanic lava threatens church, more homes on La Palma

LOS LLANOS DE ARIDANE, Canary Islands (AP)—A fresh river of lava from the volcano on Spain's La Palma island threatened Wednesday to engulf a parish church that has so far survived the eruption that shows no signs of relenting after 10 weeks. The nearest lava flow to the Los Llanos de Aridane church has slowed down since it started over the weekend but it is still only 1 kilometer (0.6 miles) away. Molten rock from the Sept. 19 eruption on La Palma, part of Spain's Canary Islands archipelago, has consumed over 1,500 buildings and covered over 1,130 hectares (2,800 acres) including banana farms, the island's main source of revenue along with tourism.



IN MEMORIAM

Glicerio 'Eli' Del Mundo Arago

Born in Mabini, Batangas, the Philippines

He has lived a life devoted to service to his countrymen.

He is also one of the very few accomplished Filipinos in the Asia-Pacific region: the Philippine Honorary Consul to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the senior vice president and chief finance officer of the largest private sector employer in the Western Pacific, Tan Holdings Corporation.

Eli, as he is fondly called, identifies himself with those in need and share their struggles in the deepest way. He has been a paragon of commitment and selfless public service to the Filipinos in the CNMI for the past 35 years.

He has joined his Creator on November 24, 2021, a day before Thanksgiving Day.

Eli steadily dedicated his time and resources to assist the needy, champion the exploited, and help the unable. He was as caring as generous as the dignitary as he was a personal friend or family members; an ever-discriminable presence felt throughout events that call for joyful celebration but also in the forefront of altruistic undertaking that dispense immediate help and humanitarian assistance throughout the community, most especially towards his fellow Filipinos.

He has nobly and humbly represented all Filipino overseas workers and residents in his graceful appearances and remarkable contributions in the CNMI community. Eli was candidly unique in many ways, but one thing in particular that makes him stand out was his character. He represented the distinct bearing of a respected leader yet always maintained the natural kindness of friend, extended help discreetly, kindly and indiscriminately.

He treated everyone the same: without partiality to favor and benefit only a few but has in fact shown many, many nameless but thankful individuals.

A true hero is one who save you at a time of need but never demanded gratitude or acknowledgement.
This was Eli's trademark.

Infinitely deserving of the prestigious 2000 Bagong Bayani (New Hero) Award of the Philippine government, he was presented with, Eli, until his very last day lives on in our hearts as a humble hero.

Thank you, Eli Arago, for all the great things you have done selflessly. Rest in peace,
assured that your memory will forever linger on as the hero you will always be.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2021

11:00 AM — ARRIVAL AT SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (DOMESTIC TERMINAL)
PROCESSION TO BORJA FUNERAL HOME

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2021

9:00 AM — PUBLIC VIEWING | 11:00 AM — MEMORIAL MASS
OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL CATHEDRAL

Please Wear Mask & Observe Social Distancing

Off The Wall

Cardboard Christmas tree display is the talk of town

ASBURY PARK, N.J. (AP)—It has been called beautiful, awesome and brilliant, a transcendent work of art that reimagines the holiday experience with local touches of the Jersey Shore.

It also has been called ridiculous, ugly and hideous, something akin to a pile of Amazon shipping boxes or a giant cat-scratching post.

Good grief!

A fresh-cut natural Christmas tree usually graces the Grand Arcade at Convention Hall on Asbury Park's historic boardwalk.

But this year, in its place is art made of cardboard in the shape of a tree that also incorporates elements of the seashore, the city's architecture and its rich musical heritage, which most notably includes Bruce Springsteen. It is designed to be recycled after it is dismantled.

"I like that it's different," said Chris Trifari of neighboring Neptune as he strolled by the



This Nov. 26, 2021 photo shows "The Giving Tree," a Christmas tree display made out of cardboard at Asbury Park NJ's Convention Hall.

AP PHOTO/WAYNE PARRY

tree. "It's pretty interesting."

"I think it's very creative," said Asbury Park resident Elizabeth Khimitch, who brought her two dogs to be photographed in front of the display. "It fits the Asbury vibe, which is different and unusual."

Others were not as appreciative.

"It looks like an Amazon package," said Anthony So-

limando, a former resident of nearby Neptune City who recently moved to Hoboken.

"Not a fan," added Amy Mackey, who lives near Asbury Park. "Asbury has conformed into this artsy town, but tradition is tradition! This is art, and I wouldn't take my child's picture in front of this tree. Can't we just have our traditional tree?"

OFFBEAT BRIEFS

Slithering 'snake burglar' steals thousands from CA salon

RIVERSIDE, Calif. (AP)—Police were looking for a man dubbed the "snake burglar" who wriggled his way through a Southern California business and fled with several thousands dollars. Surveillance video showed the man slithering on his belly at the Rustic Roots salon in Riverside at around 5 a.m. last Friday after apparently getting into the business through a rooftop fire escape. "It just gave me chills up my spine," owner Lori Hajj told KNBC-TV. Hajj says the thief she calls the "snake burglar" stole hundreds of dollars worth of products, cash from the register and a safe with more than \$8,000 inside. A security guard who was installing a new alarm system at the salon told KNBC-TV that the crook had been trying successfully to avoid a motion sensor.

Drivers scramble as cash falls from armored truck on freeway

CARLSBAD, Calif. (AP)—Drivers scrambled to grab cash Friday morning after bags of money fell out of an armored truck on a Southern California freeway, authorities said. The incident occurred shortly before 9:15 a.m. on Interstate 5

in Carlsbad. "One of the doors popped open and bags of cash fell out," California Highway Patrol Sgt. Curtis Martin said. Several bags broke open, spreading money—mainly \$1 and \$20 bills—all over the lanes and bringing the freeway to a chaotic halt, Martin said. Video posted online showed some people laughing and leaping as they held wads of cash. Two people were arrested at the scene, and Martin warned that any others who are found to have taken the money could face criminal charges. He noted there was plenty of video taken by bystanders at the scene and that the CHP and FBI were investigating.

Rare coin minted in Colonial New England sells for \$350,000

BOSTON (AP)—One of the first coins minted in Colonial New England, which was recently found among other coins in a candy tin, has sold at auction for more than \$350,000, more than it was expected to get, the auctioneer said Friday. The one shilling silver coin made in Boston in 1652—considered the finest example of just a few dozen such coins known to still exist—was sold to an anonymous online bidder from the U.S., London-based Morton & Eden Ltd. said in a statement.

Lock in: Dozens stuck in England's highest pub after storm

LONDON (AP)—Dozens of customers who stopped for a drink at Britain's highest altitude pub got a longer stay than they bargained for, after the building was cut off by a blizzard. Sixty-one people woke up Monday after their third night at the Tan Hill Inn in the Yorkshire Dales, 270 miles (435 kilometers) north of London. They have been unable to leave since Friday, when a late autumn storm brought snow and heavy winds that felled power cables and blocked roads. The pub sits 1,732 feet (528 meters) above sea level and is used to being cut off by bad weather.

Germany: Burglars knock hole in wall to steal Lego bricks

BERLIN (AP)—German police are looking for witnesses after burglars broke through the wall of a toy store to steal dozens of Lego sets. Police said Tuesday that the theft took place over the weekend in the western town of Lippstadt. The burglars left about 100 empty cardboard boxes behind, German news agency dpa reported. It wasn't immediately clear whether the burglars had taken the instruction books.

Science & Technology

Australia's Great Barrier Reef erupts in color as corals spawn

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—Australia's Great Barrier Reef is spawning in an explosion of color as the World Heritage-listed natural wonder recovers from life-threatening coral bleaching episodes.

Scientists on Tuesday night recorded the corals fertilizing billions of offspring by casting sperm and eggs into the Pacific Ocean off the Queensland state coastal city of Cairns.

The spawning event lasts for two or three days.

The network of 2,500 reefs covering 348,000 square kilometers (134,000 square miles) suffered significantly



from coral bleaching caused by unusually warm ocean temperatures in 2016, 2017 and last year. The bleaching damaged two-thirds of the coral.

Gareth Phillips, a marine scientist with Reef Teach, from coral bleaching caused by unusually warm ocean temperatures in 2016, 2017 and last year. The bleaching damaged two-thirds of the coral.

Corals fertilize billions of offspring by casting sperm and eggs into the Pacific Ocean off the Queensland state coastal city of Cairns, Tuesday, Nov. 23, 2021.

GABRIEL GUZMAN/ CALYPSO PRODUCTIONS VIA AP

a tourism and educational business, is studying the spawning as part of a project to monitor the reef's health.

"It is gratifying to see the reef give birth," Phillips said in a statement on Wednesday. "It's a strong demonstration that its ecological functions are intact and working after being in a recovery phase for more than 18 months."

Spam still plagues us, but here are some precautions to take

Spam is still making people mad—and perplexed.

Joe Shikonya of La Crosse, Wisconsin, wonders if he should change his e-mail address to avoid junk e-mail, or spam. And is there some way to track down the people who send it?

Dennis Volz of Parker, Colorado, wonders how someone could send spam to a secondary e-mail account that he hasn't even used yet. Is his internet service provider recycling old e-mail addresses, or disclosing new e-mail addresses to the public?

Let's start with this premise: You can't stop spam. You can only try to reduce the amount of spam you receive, and to route what you do get to your spam folder instead of your inbox.

The best way to accomplish those things is by labeling unwanted messages as spam (so your e-mail provider can try to block them in the future) and by being careful how you handle e-mail.

So, which strategies will help you achieve those goals and which ones won't?

Changing your main e-mail address to avoid spam is probably fruitless. You'll go to a lot of work to tell every person and business you deal with that you've got a new address, and in a couple of weeks you'll be getting a lot of spam again.

Can you track down the people who send spam and make them stop? No. They are always on the move, changing their e-mail addresses and internet service providers so

they can remain anonymous.

Can you find out how someone sent spam to a brand-new e-mail address you haven't even used yet? Yes, but knowing won't help you. Spammers can find your new address by using a "dictionary attack," in which many potential e-mail addresses are tried at once to find a few to which spam can be sent.

These spam messages are then sent out by the millions. If an address doesn't exist, the message will bounce back to the spammer, who will then delete that address from his or her mailing list. But if the spam is sent to your new, never-used e-mail address it will be delivered and the spammer will know to send that address more spam in the future.

So, if these spammers are so smart, how can you defeat them? Here are some ways:

■ Never click on anything in a spam message. Just send it to the spam folder.

■ If you think an e-mail is spam, don't even open it. Many spam e-mails contain a link to a tiny image file that's located on a distant server. When you open the spam e-mail, that image downloads from the server to your computer. That gives the spammer your IP (internet proto-

TECH Q&A

By STEVE ALEXANDER
Star Tribune



Email tech questions to Steve Alexander at steve.j.alexander@gmail.com. Please include a full name, city and phone number.

Life & Style

Parton, Oh, Biles and teachers named 'People of the Year'

NEW YORK (AP)—People magazine has named Olympic gymnast Simone Biles, actor Sandra Oh, country icon Dolly Parton and the nation's teachers as its "2021 People of the Year."

"This year has been a transformative one, push-

ing us all to create something new and hopefully better for our lives," the magazine said. "This issue reflects that spirit: Our People of the Year cover stars have all led the way in their fields to help make the world a little bit better."

Parton was cited for giving away millions of books and supporting COVID-19 research and Oh was celebrated for fighting anti-Asian hate and working on "transformative stories." People said Biles' focus on mental health "re-

defined what it means to win in sports." And the nation's more than 3 million teachers have "gone above and beyond to ensure our nation's kids have bright opportunities ahead."



Parton



Oh



Biles

The new issue hits newsstands Friday.

Last year, People named George Clooney, Dr. Anthony Fauci, Selena Gomez and Regina King as the "2020 People of the Year."



ROCKIN' NEW YORK CITY

The Rockefeller Center Christmas tree stands lit at Rockefeller Center during the 89th annual Rockefeller Center Christmas tree lighting ceremony, Wednesday, Dec. 1, 2021, in New York.

AP PHOTO/JOHN MINCHILLO

Ex-child actor in 'Beasts of the Southern Wild' shot, killed

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Jonshel Alexander, a onetime child actor who played a supporting role in the 2012 Oscar-nominated film "Beasts of the Southern Wild," was killed in a weekend shooting in her native Louisiana. She was 22.

Police said Alexander and

a man were shot inside a vehicle Saturday in New Orleans and she was pronounced dead at the scene. The man, whose name was not released, drove to a hospital for treatment.

At age 12, Alexander played the character Joy Strong in "Beasts of the Southern Wild,"

a drama filmed near Houma recounting the story of a poor Louisiana bayou community struggling for survival. The film won the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival and was nominated for four Academy Awards, including best picture.

Trump tested COVID-positive pre-debate, ex-aide says in book

Donald Trump tested positive for COVID-19 three days before his first presidential debate in September 2020 with Joe Biden, according to a new book by Trump's former chief of staff.

In "The Chief's Chief," obtained by The Guardian before its Dec. 7 release, Mark Mead-

ows writes that the then-president received a negative test shortly after the positive test and resumed his usual activities, including attending the debate against his Democratic challenger. Trump on Wednesday called the story "Fake News."

The revelation, if con-

Mother dislikes son for his resemblance to her brother

DEAR ABBY: My 25-year-old son is a single father of three boys, 6, 4 and almost 3. They have been living with me, my youngest and my husband in a two-bedroom house for a while now, and I'm not happy with my life.

I enjoy my grandkids, but I don't enjoy my son. He looks and acts like my older brother, who I never liked because he was mean and bullied me even as an adult. What can I say or do to get my son out, and how do I deal with my feelings toward him? I love him, but I don't really like him.

OVER IT IN NEW MEXICO

DEAR OVER IT: If the only thing you have against your son is his strong physical resemblance to your brother—whom you dislike for good reason—you are being unfair to him. However, this is your home, and if the conditions are no longer pleasant for you, you have the right to change them. Give your son a reasonable deadline to find other living arrangements without alienating him, if that is possible. (Your living conditions ARE crowded right now, so your reason is valid.)

DEAR ABBY: I am the youngest of eight children. My oldest sibling, "Lois," is 72. She is in the habit of returning "gifts" she

says I gave to her as far back as 40 years ago. (She doesn't want to deal with getting rid of the items herself.) I think this is extremely rude. Lois does this only with me and one other sister.

Most of the time, I don't even remember the gift, or I already have one of the items. She'll usually attach a "sweet" note to it to make me feel guilty for not keeping it. She will also send it to me via another family member. I try to tell her to pay it forward to someone who could use or enjoy the item, but she ignores me. How do I get her to stop this?

GIVE AND TAKE IN TEXAS

DEAR GIVE AND TAKE: You can't get Lois to stop, so stop trying. When it happens again, find the humor in it and donate the item to a thrift shop. (Or rewrap it and gift it to another relative for Christmas or a birthday.)

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Every day when I bring my lunch to work, one of my co-workers asks, "Hey, what are you eating?" I tell her and offer her some, and she accepts each and every time. This has been going on for weeks. While I'm not against sharing, I would like to enjoy my entire lunch. I think I'm being taken advantage of because I'm polite.

The last time she asked, I told her what I was eating, but did NOT offer her any. Was that wrong? Should I be responsible

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



for feeding her every day? Bear in mind that when she does it, she has already eaten her own lunch.

HUNGRY IN THE SOUTH

DEAR HUNGRY: During the pandemic, food sharing has become a no-no. I wonder where you got the idea that because someone asks you what you're eating it means you must offer to share it. Now that you know your co-worker is a human vacuum cleaner, continue to just answer her question. If you do, I'm betting she will soon stop asking.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes



By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

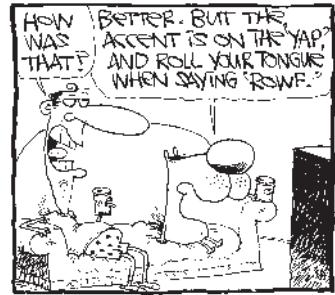


By Bryan Basset

The Duplex



By Glenn McCoy

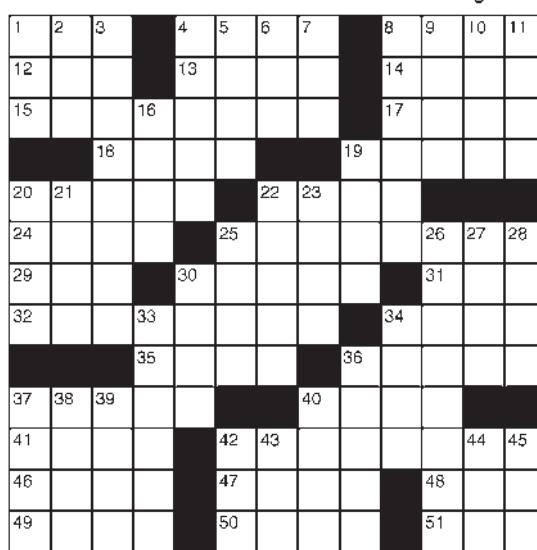


CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS		36	Obey a comma	DOWN	16	London gallery
1	Canine cry	37	Com-mence	1	Justice Dept.	19 Twitches
4	Beach crawler	40	German mister	2	Seminary subj.	20 During
8	Con job	41	Ibsen's home	3	Blos-somed	21 Exceptional
12	— Aviv	42	Moving, as in a group	4	Leek relative	22 Shopping centers
13	Bagel feature	43	In — (shortly)	5	Actor's quest	23 Pot starter
14	Pequod captain	44	Classic Kinks	6	100%	25 Froth
15	Fleet of ships	45	song	7	"Don't — stranger!"	26 Thrive
17	Turkish money	46	Vast expanse	8	Entice	27 Applications
18	Greet silently	47	Electron-ics	9	Deli meat	28
19	Records	48	giant	10	Read quickly	30
20	Mountain crest	49	Some corp.	11	Intel product	33
22	Hurt severely	50	Furtive laugh	12	Madness	34
24	Stallion's mate		recruits	13	Fir coat	36
25	Imaginary			14	Pie variety	37
29	Rage			15	Old U.S. gas brand	38
30	Varieties			16	Hidden valley	39
31	Baton Rouge sch.			17	Spanish greeting	40
32	Name in someone's honor			18	Winter ailment	42
34	Afrikaner			19	Texter's guffaw	43
35	River blockers			20	Born	44
				21	"How frustrating!"	45

Solution time: 25 mins.

**STUMPED?**

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:

Amanda Seyfried, 36; Tiffany Haddish, 42; Daryl Hannah, 61; Julianne Moore, 61.

Happy Birthday: You'll have the ability to jump from one thing to another this year, but don't leave unfinished business in your wake. Finish what you start, and you'll have far more success moving forward and attracting new and exciting opportunities. Choose to act and take responsibility for what you say, do and achieve, and rewards will follow. Leave nothing to chance. Your numbers are 6, 13, 23, 29, 32, 38, 40.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Attend an event. Get together with people who are upbeat and bring out the best in you. Don't let the changes going on around you dampen your day. Make your feelings and intentions known, and progress will follow. ★★★★

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Go over contracts, deals and proposals carefully.

You stand to gain if you pay attention to detail. Protect your health and your reputation. Do your own thing, regardless of what others do. Your instincts will pay off. ★★★★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): A passionate gesture will make someone take notice. Your actions will set the stage for what's to come. Let your feelings lead the way, and you will convince others to get involved in your plans. Self-improvement and romance are favored. ★★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Set the pace and stay in control. If you give someone a chance to meddle or interfere, you will lose control and your reputation. Stick to the truth, take a disciplined approach and finish what you start. Success will be yours. ★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Question anything that sounds unrealistic. Use what's available to work with to come up

with a workable solution. Put your energy where it counts, and you'll make a difference. Be honest regarding personal plans. Romance will improve a meaningful relationship. ★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Attend an event. Get together with people who are upbeat and bring out the best in you. Don't let the changes going on around you dampen your day. Make your feelings and intentions known, and progress will follow. ★★★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Make the adjustments that make you happy. You can't please everyone, so do what suits your needs and helps you reach your goals. A domestic problem is best taken care of with diplomacy. Have a plan in mind, and make unbiased suggestions. ★★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Say no. Don't take on something you don't want or know how to do. Put your time and effort where they will do the most, and you'll eliminate a situation that makes you uncomfortable. A budget will control spending. ★★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Avoid disappointment by doing for yourself. Someone you count on will lead you astray. Consider your objective, take a direct path to your destination. An idea will result in a cheaper, more efficient way to run your household. ★★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You know the rules. Make wise decisions and take responsibility for your actions. Refuse to let someone put you on the spot or make you look bad. Be prepared, and you will outsmart anyone who gets in your way. ★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Question anything that sounds unrealistic. Use what's available to work with to come up

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY



COURTESY 2007 UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Make sure the people you rely on are competent. Someone who sounds knowledgeable will be a better talker than a hands-on helper. Choose to put your energy behind the money you are spending to get things done right. Take responsibility and flourish. ★★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Finish what you start before you move on to events that put a smile on your face. Chatting with someone who has knowledge and experience to help you cut corners will get you into the fast lane. Leave nothing to chance. ★★★★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Emotional incidents will mess with your mind. Don't take what others say to heart. Distance yourself from anyone prying or belittling you. Concentrate on personal growth, your beliefs, and feeling and looking your best. Walk away from toxic relationships. ★★★

Birthday Baby: You are witty, determined and insightful. You are inspiring and responsive.

●: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ★: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ★★★: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ★★★★: Aim high; start new projects. ★★★★★: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

6			8	7	
	3				9
2	8		4		
	9	1	7	6	
1	4	8	7		
	4		3	9	
5			4		
6	5				2

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

8	2	6	7	4	3	5	9	1
4	3	1	8	5	9	2	7	6
5	9	7	1	2	6	8	3	4
6	8	3	5	9	4	7	1	2
7	1	4	2	6	8	3	5	9
2	5	9	3	7	1	6	4	8
9	6	8	4	3	7	1	2	5
1	7	2	9	8	5	4	6	3
3	4	5	6	1	2	9	8	7

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

DRY RUBS

G	A	B	Y	L	E	A	F	E	C	I	P	S	T
E	N	R	B	L	E	N	D	D	L	I	M	W	H
M	I	I	D	N	U	O	R	G	I	I	N	Y	R
T	S	S	N	T	G	R	I	L	L	L	M	R	I
U	E	K	O	E	G	F	E	N	N	E	L	O	M
N	S	E	E	D	S	F	I	S	H	E	I	V	P
T	W	T	S	E	K	A	L	F	M	E	S	A	R
S	E	S	A	M	E	S	O	T	A	A	S	E	A
A	M	P	C	U	M	I	N	S	L	R	B	C	G
O	I	O	V	E	N	B	A	M	I	N	O	I	N
R	X	W	K	P	R	T	O	B	R	O	I	L	I
A	T	D	R	E	E	N	S	A	G	E			

Bucks pick up 8th win in a row behind Giannis' 40 points



MILWAUKEE (AP) — Giannis Antetokounmpo scored on a driving layup with two seconds left to give Milwaukee a 127-125 victory over the Charlotte Hornets on Wednesday night, the Bucks' eighth consecutive victory.

Antetokounmpo had 40 points and 12 rebounds and Khris Middleton added 21 points for the Bucks.

LaMelo Ball had a career-high 36 points for the Hornets, followed by Kelly Oubre Jr. with 25 and Miles Bridges with 22 points.

Middleton buried a 3-pointer from the top left to put Milwaukee in front 123-122 with 52 seconds left. Antetokounmpo's lay-in on the Bucks' next possession was negated by an offensive foul.

Gordon Hayward missed a jumper from the top of the key for the Hornets, and Middleton hit two free throws to make it 125-122 with 8.6 seconds remaining.

Ball made a fadeaway 3-pointer — his eighth of the game — with 5.9 seconds left to pull the Hornets even at 125. After a timeout, Jru Holliday fed Antetokounmpo near the top of the lane for the left-side layup.

Celtics 88, 76ers 87

In Boston, Jayson Tatum scored 26 points with a career-high 16 rebounds, shaking off a hard fourth-quarter fall to lead to lead Boston over Philadelphia.

Tatum scored 11 points in the fourth. Robert Williams III blocked Georges Niang's shot at the buzzer to give the Celtics the victory.

It was their first game this season against their longtime Eastern Conference rivals and former coach Doc Rivers.

Joel Embiid had 18 rebounds for Philadelphia, adding 13 points on 3 for 17 shooting. Seth Curry had 17 points and Shake Milton came off the bench to score 16.

Magic 108, Nuggets 103

In Orlando, Fla., Cole Anthony scored 24 points, Wendell Carter Jr. added 18 points and Orlando rallied from an early 16-point deficit to defeat Denver and end its seven-game



AP
Milwaukee Bucks' Giannis Antetokounmpo reacts during the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Charlotte Hornets Wednesday, Dec. 1, 2021, in Milwaukee.

losing streak.

The Magic took their first lead of the night at 106-103 when rookie Franz Wagner drilled a step-back 3-pointer with 1:45 to play.

The Magic's rally ruined the return of Nuggets' forward Aaron Gordon, who played at the Amway Center for the first time since Orlando traded him to Denver on March 28. Gordon scored 17 points, grabbed eight rebounds and had three thunderous dunks.

Anthony, who returned after missing the previous six games with an ankle injury, had his ninth 20-point game and chipped in eight rebounds and seven assists.

Monte Morris scored a season-best 22 points, while Nikola Jokic had 18 points, 15 rebounds and seven assists for the Nuggets.

Hawks 114, Pacers 111

In Indianapolis, Trae Young made two crucial free throws in the final seconds of the game to help Atlanta fend off Indiana.

Pacers rookie Chris Duarte came up with a steal late in the game, but was unable to convert a contested layup. Young was fouled and made the final two of his 33 points. Young also had 10 assists and eight rebounds for the Hawks.

Kevin Huerter finished with 19 points, and John Collins scored 14 for Atlanta.

Malcolm Brogdon led the Pacers with 27 points. Domantas Sabonis scored 22 points and grabbed 10 rebounds, and Myles Turner had 17 points and nine rebounds.

Mavericks 139, Pelicans 107

In New Orleans, Luka Doncic scored 18 of his team-high 28 points in the first quarter and dished out 14 assists in 27 minutes to power Dallas over New Orleans.

Dallas set a franchise record by shooting 57 of 83 from the floor (68.7%), beating the previous high of 67.7% from March 24, 1983.

Doncic went 7 of 8 from the floor in the Mavericks' 41-point first quarter — their highest-scoring period of the season in which they shot 73% from the floor (16 of 22).

Kristaps Porzingis added 20 points and 10 rebounds for Dallas, which had lost five of its previous six games.

New Orleans, which entered having won three of their last four games, was paced by Brandon Ingram with 29 points.

Rockets 114, Thunder 110

In Oklahoma City, Jae'Sean Tate scored a career-high 32 points and

added 10 rebounds, seven assists and five blocked shots, sparking a fourth-quarter rally to lead short-handed Houston Rockets over Oklahoma City.

The Rockets won their fourth straight and the Thunder dropped their seventh in a row. Oklahoma City led 81-73 at the end of three quarters before Houston started chipping away behind Tate and Armoni Brooks, who had 18 points on 7-of-10 shooting.

After Tate's bucket gave the Rockets a 111-108 lead with 26 seconds left, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander had his potential game-tying 3-pointer rim out. Gilgeous-Alexander had a career-high 39 points but was only 1 of 8 beyond the arc.

Wizards 115, Timberwolves 107

In Washington, Montrezl Harrell scored 27 points and Bradley Beal added 19 to lift Washington over Minnesota.

Timberwolves star Karl-Anthony Towns had to leave the game with 2:14 remaining after injuring himself on a dunk.

Towns scored only two of his 34 points in the final period — and that was when he got free along the baseline for a dunk. After slamming the ball through, his momentum caused

for a boycott of the 2022 Beijing Olympics.

He first got a U.S. green card while he was with the Oklahoma City Thunder in 2015. He has been trying to become a citizen ever since.

"It's been very rough, obviously, because the Turkish government put my name on Interpol (watch) lists, and they revoked my passport," Freedom said. "But it's finally happened. I have been waiting on this moment since the day I stepped in America."

He said the inspiration for his name change has roots in the first trip he made to the U.S. in 2009. He was with his teammates when one of them began criticizing former Presi-

dent Barack Obama.

"I was very scared (for) him, I turned around and was like: 'Dude, what are you doing? They're gonna throw you in jail.' He turned around and started laughing at me. He's like, 'Brother, don't worry about it, this is not Turkey,'" Freedom said. "In America people are very blessed to be in this situation, to have freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of expression, freedom of press. ... People in Turkey, there are so many political prisoners and so many journalists are in a jail right now."

"Here I wanted to make that word part of me."

He said the support of his teammates has given him mo-

his body to fall horizontally and he appeared to land on his tailbone.

Daniel Gafford had 18 points and 10 rebounds for the Wizards, who were back home after a four-game road trip.

Cavaliers 111, Heat 85

In Miami, Kevin Love scored 22 points to help Cleveland snap a 20-game losing streak in Miami.

Jarrett Allen added 19 points and 11 rebounds and Darius Garland finished with 16 points for the Cavaliers, who had not won on the Heat's home court since Jan. 25, 2010. The Cavaliers also got a double-double from Evan Mobley with his 17-point, 11-rebound outing.

Tyler Herro scored 21 points for Miami. Dewayne Dedmon started at center in place of Bam Adebayo, who learned Wednesday that he's likely out until at least mid-January with a torn right-thumb ligament.

Kings 124, Clippers 115

In Los Angeles, De'Aaron Fox scored 24 points and Terence Davis added 23 in the Sacramento Kings' 124-115 victory over the shorthanded Los Angeles Clippers on Wednesday night.

Richaun Holmes had 16 points and 11 rebounds as the Kings snapped a two-game skid and improved to 3-3 under interim coach Alvin Gentry after a 6-11 start that led to Luke Walton's firing last month.

Paul George sat out to rest for the Clippers, and Sacramento had little trouble with Los Angeles' role players early on, jumping to a 20-point lead early in both halves and never trailing at Staples Center.

But five Clippers reserves led a 14-0 rally in the final minutes while the Kings still had four starters in the game, trimming Sacramento's lead to eight points with 1:28 to play. Fox hit a clinching layup in the final minute.

George hadn't sat all season, but in doing so, he left the Clippers without both cornerstones of the roster that reached the Western Conference finals last summer for the first time in franchise history. Kawhi Leonard isn't close to making his season debut after undergoing knee ligament surgery in July.

Celtics' Freedom calls becoming US citizen 'unforgettable'



Boston Celtics' Enes Kanter smiles before an NBA basketball game against the Toronto Raptors, on Oct. 22, 2021, in Boston.

BOSTON (AP) — Enes Freedom will now be linked forever to a word he says he fought for his entire life.

The Boston Celtics center changed his name from Enes Kanter to Enes Kanter Freedom in celebration of him officially becoming a United States citizen on Monday.

He said Tuesday that taking the citizenship oath was "maybe the most unforgettable moment that I had in my life."

Freedom, 29, is a native of Turkey who has been an outspoken critic of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the Turkish government.

The 2011 first-round draft pick has also taken to social

media to support Tibetan independence and criticize Chinese treatment of the Uyghur people. During games, he has worn shoes decorated to say "Free Tibet" and argued

tivation to speak out for causes he believes in, such as human rights violations in China and around the world. He also said he had a conversation with NBA Commissioner Adam Silver before the season to ensure his actions wouldn't be an issue.

"I always try to stand up for the freedom, for the truth and for democracy. It doesn't matter who it's for or against," Freedom said. "I told Adam, 'Am I breaking any rules?' He said no. I told him, if there are any rules that I'm breaking, let me know. I'll be the first one to follow. He said, 'No, you're not violating any rules.' He's like, 'Listen, you have the freedom to say whatever you want.'"

Teams spend \$1.4B on day MLB, union likely head to lockout



**N E W
Y O R K**
(A P) —

Before getting locked out, players loaded up Wednesday as big league teams unlocked their coffers for an unprecedented spending spree.

Major League Baseball clubs committed to a one-day record \$1.4 billion in salaries Wednesday, hours before the league was expected to lock out players following the 11:59 p.m. expiration of the collective bargaining agreement.

Six nine-figure contracts were handed out, including two by the Texas Rangers — shortstop Corey Seager got \$325 million over 10 years and infielder Marcus Semien will make \$175 million over seven years.

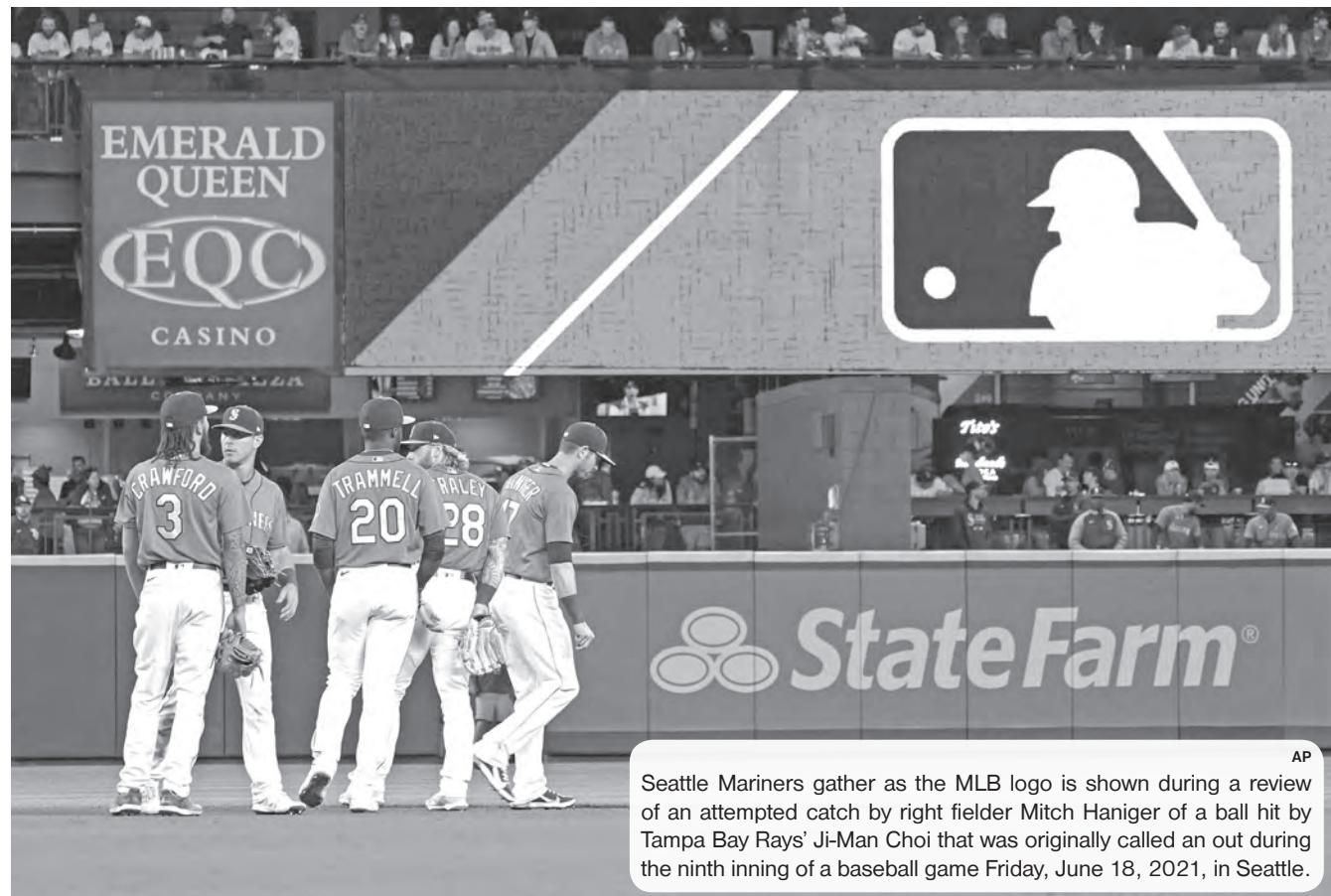
The Detroit Tigers got infielder Javier Báez for a \$140 million, six-year deal, ace Max Scherzer was assured \$130 million over three years from the New York Mets, and right-hander Kevin Gausman landed with the Toronto Blue Jays for \$110 million over five years. Twins center fielder Byron Buxton also finalized a \$100 million, seven-year contract to remain with Minnesota.

It's the first time teams have combined to spend over \$1 billion in a single day.

"This is actually kind of fun," Scherzer said. "I'm a fan of the game, and to watch everybody sign right now, to actually see teams competing in this kind of timely fashion, it's been refreshing because we've seen freezes for the past several offseasons."

The 23 deals and counting announced Wednesday totaled \$1,408,250,000, part of roughly \$2 billion in new contracts handed out since the end of the World Series ahead of the CBA expiration.

"This year was a situation where we received some calls early and had some interest in what we were asking for,"



AP
Seattle Mariners gather as the MLB logo is shown during a review of an attempted catch by right fielder Mitch Haniger of a ball hit by Tampa Bay Rays' Ji-Man Choi that was originally called an out during the ninth inning of a baseball game Friday, June 18, 2021, in Seattle.

said Semien, a free agent for the second straight year. "It became easier to narrow a decision down. What it came down to was an opportunity to build something."

The union and league are

likely headed for a protracted labor dispute after the average major league salary fell on opening day in 2021 for the fourth consecutive season.

Players and teams alike may have feared the chaos of a limited free-agency window in the spring if the lockout goes that long. That spurred agents, general managers and owners to act before rosters froze.

"It was 50-50," Báez said. "We didn't know what was going to happen when the deadline comes. I was just making sure I wanted to be with one of the best teams."

Teams likely won't be able to communicate with their players during the shutdown.

"We were talking about that yesterday. It's funny how you sign it and the next day you're shut out," Seager said.

"They've been upfront with me. I know what to expect from them. They know what to expect from me. They know I'm going to come prepared. They know I want to be prepared."

Plenty of big names remain on the board, though. Star shortstop Carlos Correa, first baseman Freddie Freeman, third baseman Kris Bryant, shortstop Trevor Story and outfielder Nick Castellanos remain free agents and might have to wait until spring or later to find a home.

Based on estimates for remaining unsigned players, MLB projects offseason spending will be about \$3 billion for a star-studded free agent class, roughly \$700 million more than the previous high.

Among the other deals completed Wednesday:

■ RHP Marcus Stroman to the Chicago Cubs, \$71 million over three years.

■ OF/INF Chris Taylor returned to the Los Angeles Dodgers, \$60 million over

four years.

■ RHP Raisel Iglesias stayed with the Los Angeles Angels, \$58 million over four years.

■ RHP Jon Gray to Texas, \$56 million over four years.

■ OF Avisail Garcia to Miami, \$53 million over four years.

D-backs add 4-time All-Star reliever Melancon on 2-year deal



AP
San Diego Padres relief pitcher Mark Melancon looks in for a sign during the team's baseball game against the Colorado Rockies on July 9, 2021, in San Diego.

PHOENIX (AP) — The Arizona Diamondbacks made a move to solidify the back end of their bullpen on Wednesday, adding four-time All-Star Mark Melancon on a two-year deal worth a reported \$14 million.

Now the D-backs have to get good enough to provide Melancon some games to actually save.

The right-handed Melancon, who will be 37 by opening day, led the big leagues with 39 saves last year in his only season with the San Diego Padres. He had a 4-3 record and 2.23 ERA to earn his first All-Star appearance since 2016.

Melancon's deal also has a mutual option for 2024.

The D-backs had problems

all over the roster last season, finishing with a 52-110 record, but a bad bullpen was among the worst issues. Almost all spots will be up for grabs next season, though holdovers like Joe Mantiply, J.B. Wendelken and Caleb Smith are prime candidates to relieve.

Arizona didn't have many leads to protect last season during the ninth inning. The entire pitching staff combined for 22 saves.

Melancon said he believes that will change in a hurry. The veteran pitched against the Diamondbacks — who were division rivals with the Padres in the NL West — eight times last season and said it was a tough group to face.

"It's tough to see it when you just look at paper, but

■ LHP Alex Wood to San Francisco, \$25 million over two years.

■ INF Eduardo Escobar to the New York Mets, \$20 million over two years.

■ INF/OF Leury Garcia to the Chicago White Sox, \$16.5 million over three years.

■ C Yan Gomes to the Chicago Cubs, \$13 million over two years.

■ RHP Yimi Garcia to Toronto, \$11 million over two years.

■ RHP Corey Kluber to Tampa Bay, \$8 million for one year.

■ RHP Andres Munoz with Seattle, \$7.5 million for four years.

■ RHP Luis Garcia with San Diego, \$7 million for two years.

■ C Roberto Perez to Pittsburgh, \$5 million for one year.

■ RHP Dylan Bundy to Minnesota, \$5 million for one year.

■ C Kevin Plawecki with Boston, \$2.25 million for one year.

Source: Cubs, Yan Gomes agree to \$13 million, 2-year deal

CHICAGO (AP) — The Chicago Cubs added another catcher on Tuesday, agreeing to a \$13 million, two-year contract with Yan Gomes.

The Cubs have Willson Contreras behind the plate, but he is eligible for free agency after next season and the team could decide to trade him if they can't reach a long-term deal this winter. They also could use Gomes to provide more rest for Contreras, who turns 30 in May.

The 34-year-old Gomes played for Washington and Oakland this year, batting .252 with 14 homers and 52 RBIs in 135

in 103 games.

A person with direct knowledge of the contract confirmed the deal to The Associated Press on Tuesday on condition of anonymity because it had not been finalized.

Gomes was selected by Toronto in the 10th round of the 2009 amateur draft and broke into the majors with the Blue Jays in 2012. He is a .247 hitter with 117 homers and 416 RBIs in 882 career games.

Gomes had his best year with Cleveland in 2014, batting .278 with a career-high 21 homers and 74 RBIs in 135

games. He also hit 16 homers for Cleveland in 2018, earning his only All-Star nod.

Chicago is retooling after going 71-91 this year for its first losing record since 2014. It claimed left-hander Wade Miley off waivers from Cincinnati on Nov. 7.

Owner Tom Ricketts said in an October letter to fans that the Cubs would "be active in free agency and continue to make thoughtful decisions to bolster our team this offseason." But the additions of Miley and Gomes have been their only moves of note so far.

when you're facing these guys and trying to get them out, it's a different story," Melancon said. "I got to see it first hand. I'm very confident in this group."

Melancon will almost certainly be the team's closer. He played in college at Arizona and has 244 career saves over

a well-traveled 13-year MLB career that includes time with the Pirates, Giants, Braves, Yankees, Astros, Red Sox, Padres and Nationals.

"He's a proven back end bullpen guy," Arizona general manager Mike Hazen said. "We talked at the beginning of the offseason about wanting to rebuild our pen. It was a major issue for us last year. ... Getting a guy in this spot was important for us."

TRAC sets 6th Saipan Duathlon on Jan. 8

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

The Triathlon Association of the CNMI will start the new year with a run-bike-run event as it hosts its 6th Saipan Duathlon on Jan. 8, 2022.

The 5-kilometer run, 20-km bike, and 2.5-km run will start at Banzai Cliff in Marpi with a 5:30am opening of the transition site and a 6:15am gun start (depending on the sunrise).

The course distance will be uniform for the men's, women's, and mixed relay division of the 6th Saipan Duathlon and road bikes, mountain bikes, and fixies are all allowed.

TRAC said there will be prizes and medals for Top 3 male and female individual winners. IT&E is the main sponsor of the 6th Saipan Duathlon.

Early bird registration fees is \$20 for individual and \$40 for team and registration fees will increase to \$25 for individual \$50 for team by



Games that the CNMI will be hosting for the very first time.

For more information, call TRAC president Manny Siteton at (670) 483-0094 or email swimbikerun.saipan@gmail.com. Registration for the 6th Saipan Duathlon opened last Dec. 1. To register, cut and paste <https://www.webscorer.com/register?rac eid=261872&fbclid=IwAR0XwZrpj9kwOmL7BThs2Jv9Ug5F5oDKika4LCrgFX6WSwDdXallbwHAJjs> to your browser.

TRAC is also reminding those vying for slots in the national team that the tryout for next year's Pacific Mini Games is tomorrow, Dec.

Jan. 3, 2022. TRAC also reminded everyone that there will be a processing fee upon registration and checkout.

Proceeds from TRAC's 6th Saipan Duathlon will go to the sport federation's preparations for the triathlon event of next year Northern Marianas Pacific Mini



MULDOON

From Page 24

she has a lot to be thankful for since moving to the islands more than a year ago.

"This Thanksgiving was my first Saipan Turkey Trot and it reminded me how much I have to be thankful for! I am thankful for my able body to get me to the highest point on island. I am thankful for my partner, Michael Denevan, who motivates me to keep training and always sets a solid pace," she said.

The California native added that she greatly admires organizations that put a premium in keeping people active by coming up with events like the Turkey Trot.

"I'm also immensely thankful for Run Saipan and Northern Mariana Athletics for creating so many opportunities for us to keep moving and getting many people out and ac-

tive. As a healthcare provider, I am thankful to see people of all ages taking on the challenge of running Mt Tapachao. Keep it up!" she said.

Noting that this year's Turkey Trot was a virtual run with NMA setting up just a water station from 6am to 8am on Thanksgiving, Muldoon said she can't wait to take part in the real deal next year.

"Of course I would prefer to compete in a live race but am happy we had a virtual option. I never have tracked a personal run for distance or time so I downloaded Strava for the first time the night before Thanksgiving. My usual running practice is to clear my head and chat with friends, without paying attention to pace. For this race, I pushed 'record' on Strava and didn't look at it again until the end," she said.

As for the turkeys she and Denevan won for placing in the Top 3 in the women's and

men's divisions, Muldoon said she'll leave the cooking to a close friend who invited him to Thanksgiving.

"This year my dear friends Ajani and Sara Burrell generously invited us for a Thanksgiving celebrated with friends. The turkey they made was delicious so I will probably show up at their door with my frozen turkey, asking for assistance. I guess we will feast since Michael Denevan won one too!"

Curiously despite her prowess in running and triathlons, Muldoon said her favorite sport is actually soccer.

"I love to run but soccer is my passion. I mostly run to stay in shape for sprinting on the soccer pitch. Right now I play on four different soccer teams and am motivated by my teammates to keep running!"

Muldoon, who currently suits up for Paire, Women's All Star Team, Saipan United, and a Men's B League team where

4, beginning 6am at Paupau Beach. The tryout are open to triathletes who have met five-year residency requirements and must have a U.S. passport.

CNMI off-island athletes must provide proof of participating in a sprint triathlon and by submitting official result in order to be considered for the team. The CNMI national team will be competing for Sprint Tri individual and Sprint Aquathlon (individual and mixed relay) in the Pacific Mini Games next year. For inquiries, email swimbikerun.saipan@gmail.com.

The Triathlon Association of the CNMI will hold its 6th Saipan Duathlon in Jan. 8 starting from Banzai Cliff in Marpi.

MARK RABAGO

she's teammates with Denevan, first visited Saipan as a rotating doctor in March 2019. She competed in the Tagaman that same year and loved the islands so much that she returned full time in March 2021.

Aside from the CNMI's year-round sunny weather and "amazing" triathlon community, Muldoon said what made Saipan her second home is the warmth of the island's people.

Her only regret is she can't represent her adopted island in next year's Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games despite topping Triathlon Association of the CNMI's first tryout last August.

"Unfortunately, I am not eligible to compete in the minigames because I will not have the minimum five years of residency. However, I did participate in the tryouts just for fun! I love cheering and inspiring others to do their best," she said.

COLIN

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pionship. He also is currently ranked 464 in doubles.

Sinclair first clinched an ITF men's tour singles championship in 2019 when he won the Claremont Club Pro Classic in California. He beat Lucas Poullain of France, 6-3, 7-6, in the finals. Winning the Claremont Club Pro also netted the then 24-year-old Sinclair \$15,000.

CNMI National Tennis coach Jeff Race also recently named Sinclair to the CNMI National Tennis Team for next year's Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games. He is one of four automatic slots in the team. The others are fellow 2019 Apia, Samoa Pacific Mini Games doubles medalist Robbie Schorr, fellow mixed doubles gold medalist Carol Lee, and Isabel Herras. Incidentally, Sinclair also won the men's singles gold in the quadrennial event.



The CNMI's Colin Sinclair, left, and Italy's Marco Brugnerotto are all smiles during the awards ceremony of the M15 Guatemala Open last Nov. 28 in Guatemala City, Guatemala. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NMIBF

From Page 24

the program to the various villages, but we just have to do it the safest possible way. We thanked everyone who came forward to offer their support to 'Bola' and for the inquiries we got from the parents and their children. We are looking forward to seeing you at the courts when we kick off 'Bola' next year, but for the meantime, practice the 3Ws, wear your mask, wash your hands, and watch your distance," the NMIBF president added.

The NMIBF Board will work on revising the schedule for the "Bola" sessions, which will cover the villages of San Antonio, Koblerville, Garapan, Susupe, Kagman, Chinatown, San Vicente, Dandan, Tanapag, and San Roque. With the postponement, there's a possibility that the NMIBF

could add more villages.

The NMIBF is offering "Bola" as a free program for children in the 12 years old and below age group. Participants will learn the fundamentals of basketball in a fun and interactive setting. The program aims to identify talents and develop coaches that will run similar initiative in their respective villages with the assistance of the NMIBF. Ultimately, the NMIBF wants to empower villages to run the program, form their own team in different age groups, and compete with other villages.

"Bola" will be held in partnership with the Office of the Governor, the Saipan Mayor's Office, the Office of Youth Affairs, the Division of Youth Services, the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, and DCCA's Sports and Recreation. (PR)



TRAC sets 6th Saipan Duathlon on Jan. 8

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Bucks pick up 8th win in a row behind Giannis' 40 points

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Colin wins 2nd championship in ITF tour

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Colin Sinclair made his home islands proud again, annexing his second championship in the International Tennis Federation Men's World Tennis Tour after winning the M15 Guatemala Open held from Nov. 22 to 28 in Guatemala City, Guatemala.

Seeded fourth, the 26-year-old **ITF** International Tennis Federation defeated fifth seed Marco Brugnerotto of Italy in the championship, 6-1, 5-7, 6-4.

The championship against Brugnerotto was the second straight game that Sinclair went

the distance, as he also needed three sets to beat sixth seed Alejandro Mendoza of Bolivia in the semifinals, 6-3, 6-7 (3), 6-2. Prior to that the Cornell University alum needed two tiebreakers to triumph over unseeded Taha Ta-



Dr. Lily Muldoon tackles the 5-kilometer run course of the Pacific Mini Games triathlon tryout last Aug. 21 in Marpi.
MARK RABAGO

Muldoon has a lot to be thankful for

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Dr. Lily Muldoon had an epiphany of some sorts after winning last week's 2021 Northern Marianas Athletics Mt. Tapochao Virtual Run.

After scaling Saipan's highest peak in a sterling time 44:46, the 36-year-old Department of Public Health director and Commonwealth Health Center Emergency Department physician said she realized See **MULDOON** on Page 23



Dr. Lily Muldoon poses in front of the Commonwealth Health Center Emergency Department.
MARK RABAGO



The CNMI's Colin Sinclair in action against Marco Brugnerotto of Italy in the championship game of the M15 Guatemala Open last Nov. 28 in Guatemala City, Guatemala.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NMIBF calls for safety first, postpones 'Bola'

In response to the growing concern over the rising COVID-19 cases in the community, the Northern Mariana Islands Basketball Federation has decided to postpone its Mini Basketball Village Outreach Program called "Bola."



The program is supposed to kick off this Saturday at the San Antonio Basketball Court, but will be moved to January next year with the exact date to be de-

termined later, according to NMIBF president James Lee.

"We met with the stakeholders in our Mini Basketball Village Outreach Program and also reached out to FIBA Oceania and FIBA Foundation, which are supporting 'Bola,'

and we all agreed to postpone the event to next year. We can't emphasize enough how we prioritize the safety of our community, especially at this time," Lee said.

"We will definitely bring See **NMIBF** on Page 23



Northern Mariana Islands Basketball Federation officials led by president James Lee, second left, pose for a photo with representatives of government agencies supporting "Bola" after a meeting at the San Vicente Youth Center in October.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO